

ILLUSTRATED TIMES

REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

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No. 664.—VOL. XI.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1867.

PRICE 3D.—STAMPED 4D.

OUR SOCIAL DUTIES.

VESTRIES and vestrymen, boards of guardians and guardians, are institutions and persons in anything but good odour with the public just now. And yet it is difficult to resist the conviction that the blame of all the shortcomings of our local governing bodies really lies with the public themselves. To abuse "Bumbledom" is the fashion of the hour; and though Bumble may merit all the abuse heaped upon him—we do not mean to be his apologists—those who so freely assail him should be quite sure that they have done their own duty; they should examine the material of which their own roofs are composed ere they begin to throw stones. It is a common remark that vestrymen, guardians of the poor, and so forth, are "low fellows—retired tradesmen, illiterate cads, and people of that sort;" and that it is no use expecting them to manage things properly. Now, all this may be true—to a large extent it is true; but whose is the fault? Undoubtedly that of the "superior classes," who habitually shirk their share in the performance of those social duties incident to the condition of society among us. Certain work has to be performed on the part of the community; we are all equally interested in its being well done; we are all bound to take our fair share of it; and if some, preferring ease or pleasure, neglect their part, it

must of necessity fall into other, and perhaps less competent, hands.

Now, this is precisely what is continually going on in English society. The duties of a vestryman, guardian of the poor, and so on, are not of a particularly agreeable nature: they involve doing much that is irksome, unpopular, and repugnant to men of refined feeling and high principle. And so this class of men eschew all connection with vestries and local boards of all sorts; and the result is, that these institutions become daily more and more vulgarised. Gentlemen—using the word in its true as well as its conventional sense—decline to take upon them parochial duties or to fill parochial offices; and the result is, that the so-called "cads" are forced to the front, and bear sway. Hence the blundering and scandals that are continually cropping up to make us ashamed of our age and country; hence workhouse abuses; hence badly-lighted, badly-paved, badly-cleaned streets; hence "deaths from starvation," and cases of gross neglect and harshness by poor-law officials and others; hence, in short, bungling and mismanagement of every kind.

All this is much to be lamented; and still more to be lamented is the cause from which it springs—the neglect, that is, of their social duties by the best, most respectable, and most kind-hearted, clear-headed, and high-minded

members of society. Were gentlemen of good social position, business habits, and generous sentiments to take that part in the management of local affairs to which their talents, standing in society, and stake in the country entitle them, and to do which they are bound by their social obligations, and for which, moreover, they have generally ample leisure, we are persuaded that the scandalous mismanagement that now disgraces public affairs would cease; the character of local governing bodies would be elevated; the posts of vestryman and guardian of the poor would become honourable; and we would be spared the humiliation of seeing men in such positions who, as in Bethnal-green, must employ paupers to do their writing because they are incapable of decent caligraphy themselves, who are "willing to drive a gentleman's coach or do any odd job of that kind;" or who, as at Farnham, allow a workhouse master to tyrannise over and dictate to them, without daring to have a mind of their own. Men with the feelings and ideas of gentlemen would never condescend to tolerate such shameful things as were wont to prevail in the workhouses of London, and as are now shown to still obtain in similar institutions throughout the provinces. A low tone pervades our local boards solely because our best citizens take no part in their proceedings. Why don't they? If they did, we



PRIZE-WINNERS AT THE DOG SHOW, BINGLEY HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

should not only have improved management in local business, and fewer scandals, but the letters M.V. and G.P. would speedily come to have as honourable a signification as M.P. and J.P. have now.

So much for the masculine portion of society. But ladies have spheres of honourable usefulness open to them also. The wives and daughters of large numbers of our most respectable citizens, being freed by their position from attending to the petty details of household management, have much leisure on their hands, which they might employ usefully in visiting the poor and the sick, in making occasional inspections of hospitals, workhouses, and so on—above all, in giving good counsel and timely aid in suffering and misfortune. For lack of real ladies to do this work—work which the real lady can most efficiently and acceptably perform—the poor, the suffering, the unfortunate, are allowed to fall into the hands of maudlin, patronising, fussy nobodies, who talk cant that is detested, and distribute tracts that are never read. Nor need ladies fear to soil their own purity or outrage their own sensibilities by mingling with their less fortunate fellow-creatures. The genuine lady, who takes a sensible and kindly interest in the welfare of those beneath her in the social scale, never fails of being treated with deference and respect by them; and work that is not deemed degrading by the Empress of the French, and is willingly undertaken by such women among ourselves as Lady Herbert, Miss Nightingale, and Mrs. W. E. Gladstone, cannot be otherwise than honourable to ladies, whatever be their rank in life.

These notions, we know, are not new; they have been advocated before; but they are not less true on that account, nor in less need of reiteration. We are all of us—men and women alike—more or less to blame in these matters. We are apt to neglect our own part in the social duties of life, and are all too prone to condemn faults and blunders which we have taken no pains to prevent, but which we both might and should have done. Instead of wasting leisure time in frivolous occupations or dawdling idleness, let all whose social position and mental capacity give them influence and weight, put their shoulders to the wheel, zealously and discreetly perform their duties to society, and see if a reformation cannot be effected in the conduct of local affairs and in the habits and character of the lower strata of the community. For our own part, we have no doubt about the matter. We feel as sure that improvement would result from such efforts, as that effects flow from causes, that day follows night, that good begets good, and that evil generates evil.

THE BIRMINGHAM DOG SHOW.

THIS exhibition, though inferior in numbers, is certainly not less important in any other respect than the shows of previous years. There is an admirable and very large collection of sporting dogs of almost every variety known in this country; and many of the dogs being famous as prize-winners, it is very interesting to see them all together and compare their appearance with what is known of them, as well as to admire the progeny by which many of them are surrounded, and which are destined to be the prize-winners and the famous dogs of future years. While admiring the intelligent countenances of some of these animals, the sly glance of others, the more or less sagacious looks of all, and thinking of their varied and quite wonderful capacities as companions and helpers of man in all ages, the affection with which they are and have been regarded by some of the most kindly natures becomes thoroughly intelligible. There are dogs here, for whose misdeeds one can understand Lance enduring a whipping to save them from the consequences of their indiscretion and ill-breeding. There are others that might have led poor Charles Lamb a dance as he went out for his "constitutional" morning walk and felt bound, like a good-natured humourist as he was, to keep up with the dog in all its wanderings lest he should lose it and incur the displeasure of its owner. There are enormous mastiffs, large as lions almost; little pets, about as big as rats; and there are dogs of all intermediate sizes. They are of all sizes, all tempers, all outward appearances, all inward powers that belong to everything called by the name of dog.

Hound and greyhound, brach and lym,
Spaniel, cur, and mongrel grim,

with a great variety of others, whose names we know nothing of in the present day, comprise the catalogue of the poet, and if they are not all represented at Birmingham there are a great many there that were never mentioned by old writers, and that would not easily come into rhyme. There is food for all reflection in a dog show. If you are in a cynical mood, you can ponder on and apply that pregnant maxim brought to light from the Vedas by a recent *Quarterly Reviewer*—"The dog follows you for the crumbs in your pocket." If you are sentimental, you will have reminiscences of the dogs of classical antiquity, and will select some affectionate and faithful-looking creature who would be likely to

Turn to his master's eyes, where'er they roam,
His wistful face, and whine a welcome home,

after a long absence of the said master. Again, if you are musing on the spitefulness of the world, you will have plenty of opportunity for moralising here; for not only are there sullen dogs, as opposed to those who are as merry as crickets, but there are those who will snap at every harmless passer-by, contrasting strongly in this respect with milder natures, who will at least seem to love those who beat and injure them. By-the-way, we do not see any shepherds' dogs in the show, and it is about the only interesting variety that we miss. All others, from the magnificent animals,

Long-eared and dewlapped like Thessalian bulls,
With ears that sweep away the morning dew,

to the hateful-looking little bull-pup—hateful to all but the fanciers of bull-pups—all are represented. Most of the classes have fewer dogs in them than last year; but on that very account, as the inferior animals are those which have been excised, the average quality is better. This is the case with regard to the blood-hounds, among which there are some magnificent animals, as the celebrated Druid and Dalesman, worthy of notice in any show, and winners of first prizes at show after show, but surpassed this year by young dogs—Mr. J. K. Field's Rufus and Mr. T. B. Browne's Hero—neither of them above two years old. The deer-hounds are always an interesting class, and the dogs are very well represented here, but the bitches are few. Greyhounds are never shown in any great force at the Birmingham show, the season being unfavourable; but an exhibition is combined with the horse show in the summer. The fox-hounds are represented by only five entries this year, and Mr. Oswald Milne, of Leamington, and Mr. Cregoe Comore, of Cheltenham, are the only exhibitors. There are only two other hounds and half a dozen harriers. The beagles are also deficient in regard to numbers. Among the pointers is a remarkably fine animal—Mr. J. L. Price's Lady Alice, which takes the Messrs. Elkington's cup as the best pointer in the show. The pointers are an average lot, and nothing more. The retrievers are a good lot, and the setters are a fair average, with a sprinkling of dogs almost

perfect. The spaniels are good, the Clumbers especially being superior to anything shown in Birmingham for some years. Among the foreign dogs there is a grand-looking animal, a Siberian deer-hound, which much resembles the old Irish wolf-hound. There are also a Russian setter and a Russian retriever. In the division for dogs not used in field sports, the mastiffs are hardly an average lot; the St. Bernards, with one or two exceptions, are rather poor; and Newfoundlanders are about an average. There is a good lot of bull-dogs, and some very fine bull-terriers. The toy-dogs generally present nothing calling for special notice—not that they are without merits, but because it is the merit we have met with so often in previous shows.

Our Engraving represents the following prize animals:—Deer-hound, Earl, first prize; greyhound, Eclipse, first prize; spaniel, Bruce, first prize; foreign sporting dog, Nijni, first prize; King Charles and Blenheim spaniels, first prizes; bulldog, Little Dick, second prize; blood-hound, Dalesman, first prize; Major, first prize; Game, first prize and Elkington cup; pointer dog, Major, first prize; setter dog, Merlin, first prize; and blood-hound bitch Gipsy, first prize.

AGRICULTURE IN IRELAND.

A QUESTION of considerable interest was discussed at the opening meeting of the session of the Statistical Society last week. The society has done good service to the public in presenting correct economic views and refuting popular fallacies by authentic facts. The question "whether emigration, so far as it has gone, has really been injurious to Ireland, and whether there is reason to fear that it will go much further," was the subject of the inaugural address by Mr. Murland, the president. In dealing with the question Mr. Murland referred to the statement that Ireland becomes a cultivated year after year, just in proportion as the population becomes reduced. This is a favourite argument of those who complain of the depression of the country and the neglect of its material interests. In proof of the assertion a comparison is drawn between its production of 16,000,000 quarters of grain in 1847, when there were eight millions and a half of people, and of only 6,840,000 quarters of grain in 1866, when there were less than six millions of people. Mr. Murland observed that if those figures, which were substantially correct, were taken by themselves, they appeared to prove the state, but if examined in connection with others it would be seen that the facts warranted a different inference. Taking the total result of the two years, it would appear that in 1847 the number of acres under cultivation was 5,238,755, while in 1866 it was 5,519,678, so that instead of having only one half the land under cultivation, as might be supposed from the first comparison, we have actually 281,103 more cultivated acres. If the relative values of the crops in the two years as given by Thom were compared, the result would be found still more satisfactory. In 1847 they were worth £23,758,588, whereas in 1865 they were valued at £29,887,703. In this calculation no account was taken of increased prices, although it is notorious that the prices of all crops have been increasing. It should not be forgotten, too, that the value of live stock has very much advanced since 1847. In that year the value of horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs was £24,437,401, whereas in 1865 it was £32,317,007. He inferred from these facts and the present low rate of wages in the country that emigration has not gone too far, and that, with the prospect of obtaining remunerative employment, which was rendered more probable for those who remained, it might be expected that in future the drain of emigration would not much exceed the natural increase of the population. The great object to which those who were interested in the prosperity of the country should devote their energies was the improved cultivation of the soil. To encourage such improvement, it was generally admitted that some amendment in the law of landlord and tenant was required. There were difficulties in determining the details of such amendment, but all sects were agreed as to the principle. He thought the safest course was not to attempt to control by legislation the tenure of land, but to make its transfer as cheap and expeditious as possible. A beneficial change had already been effected by the operation of the Landed Estates Court, whose practice of selling estates in lots had greatly increased the number of proprietors. The cultivation of small farms would also tend to benefit the country. He called attention to the fact that before 1845 the whole country was subject to periodical distress, whereas it is now confined almost exclusively to the west, where the people have no employment except upon their poor farms, which, owing to the severity of the climate, can barely afford them the necessities of life in favourable seasons. From a Parliamentary return of the holdings in Ireland under the annual rental of £4, it appeared that one third of the whole number was in Donegal, Mayo, and Galway, and the probable value of them was between £2 and £3 a year. If the occupiers and their holdings in fee and rent-free they would still be in poverty. No just man would suggest that these people should be turned out of doors, but the only way of improving their condition was by assisting them to remove to other places where they could find employment.

A PREDICTION.—Mr. Bosco, the well-known conjuror, spent the winter of 1858-9 in Berlin, and was one day summoned to appear at the palace, in order to exhibit his art before the present King (at that time Prince Regent) and the Court. Among other apparatus he had a terrestrial globe, upon which Prussia was made to appear extremely small. Bosco advanced to the Prince, who was sitting on an arm chair in the front row, and asked him to take the globe in his hands. The Prince did so, when, to his astonishment, the former little Prussia began to assume much larger dimensions. "Your Royal Highness perceives," said Bosco, "how Prussia will become aggrandised under your hands." The trick was loudly applauded at the time; but little did the spectators imagine that what was intended as a courtly jest was destined to become political earnest within seven years from that time.

RELIEF OF THE POOR IN SCOTLAND.—The Board of Supervision for the Relief of the Poor in Scotland state in the report which they have issued that the number of registered poor relieved in the year ending May 14, 1867, was 100,756, an increase of 3082 over the preceding year; and the number of their dependents it returned as 63,648, an increase of 3056. The number of casual poor relieved in the year was 48,519, an increase of 4426; and the number of their dependents was 42,657, an increase of 2296. But 12,126 casual poor, with 12,606 dependents, were also enumerated as registered poor. At the end of the year, on May 14, 1867, there were 76,737 registered poor, with 44,432 dependents, and 3576 unregistered or casual poor, with 3616 dependents; 5615 casual poor were receiving relief. The number in the workhouses on July 1, 1867, was 8291, of whom 1549 were sick persons, 999 lunatics, and 1267 children. 6003 poor were refused relief in the year; 256 of such poor were relieved under order of the sheriff. 501 applications were made to the Board of Supervision complaining of inadequate relief; most of these were refused, but in 89 cases the ground of complaint was removed. In the course of the year the board investigated charges against twenty-three inspectors of poor; four inspectors were dismissed, five were permitted to resign, one was suspended, seven were censured or admonished, four were acquitted of the charges; one medical officer, after investigation of charges against him, was dismissed; one governor of a poorhouse was censured. The cost of relief and management of the poor in the year (including £50,419 expended on buildings) was £807,631, which is £24,503 more than in the preceding year, and amounts to 5s. 3d. per head of the population enumerated at the Census of 1861. It is £8 13s. 3d. per cent on the annual value of real property, according to the returns of 1843; £6 18s. per cent, according to the annual value returned in 1856; £6 5s. 4d. per cent, according to an estimate for 1859. The number of parishes raising the funds for the relief of the poor by voluntary contributions continues to decrease, and has now fallen to 102; 783 parishes raise those funds by assessment.

MR. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P., ON THE IRISH LAND QUESTION.—Mr. Henry Dix Hutton publishes the following letter received by him from Mr. John Bright:—"Rochdale, Nov. 11, 1867. My dear Sir,—I have read your 'Prussia and Ireland' with much interest, and, as far as you go, I agree with you, but I think more requires to be done. Your plan is to help tenants to buy farms where owners are willing to sell, to lend them money on easy terms, and to take good security for the transaction. Owners are not very willing to sell, and the process of restoration, of creating an Irish proprietary, would be very slow. In my speech in Dublin a year ago, I suggested another plan, not unlike yours, but more certainly operative, and with which yours might be combined. I proposed a Parliamentary Commission, empowered to buy large estates, particularly of English proprietors of Irish property, and to resell them in existing farms to existing tenants, on terms something like those which you propose. A sum of £5,000,000 thus at the disposal of the commission would secure some large estates, and the process of creating 'farmers, owners of farms' would begin at once, and would go on rapidly. Your plan, in fifty years, would do much good, mine would do much in five years, and in twenty years or less would change the aspect of things in Ireland. You want the changes we are both in favour of—that is, we want to make the Irish farmer more attached to the soil by the tie of ownership rather than by that which now exists, the necessity to have a holding in land that he may live. We want, further, to beget a new and better national sentiment, to convince every Irishman now on the land that we do not intend to drive him across the Atlantic, but to remain a contented dweller on his own soil. I think my scheme would do this—would give hope and faith, and inspire him with a belief in the future, and stimulate him to effort and industry. You will see the difference between your scheme and mine; yours is for a long time, and for the future; mine is to grapple at once with the desperate malady which keeps your country in a state of chronic discontent and insurrection. Your plan may be more easily secured, but our children will only see much result from it; mine would, I think, restore confidence and banish speedily some of the despair and disloyalty which so extensively prevail. In some of our colonies—in Canada and in New Brunswick, I believe—Government has bought off landlords' rights, with great advantage to the people. Why not try something in Ireland?"

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

The proposal for a conference on the Roman question may be considered to have failed. The most contradictory information respecting it comes to hand; but everything shows that the difficulties in the way are not likely to be surmounted. One account tells us that all the Powers save three have consented to take part in the conference, and that Russia holds back until she sees what course will be taken by the Italian Parliament. Another gravely assures us that the condition on which Switzerland accepted the proposal was that the decision of the conference should not be binding upon either of the parties concerned. Again we are informed that Baron von Beust has a proposal of his own for a conference on the question.

In the Legislative Corps M. Jules Favre submitted an interpellation on the Roman question. He hoped that the Legislative body would express its disapproval of the expedition to Rome for four reasons:—The expedition was contrary to the principles of right, and compromised the interests of France; it was especially detrimental to the cause it wished to serve; it placed France in a series of complications, out of which it was only possible to escape by committing an error or by provoking legitimate discontent. M. Jules Favre reproached the Government with acting without consulting the Legislative Corps. It was the duty of the Chamber to provide for the consequences of accomplished facts. M. Jules Favre then entered into a long historical narrative of the facts which preceded the expedition. He did not admit that the French Government was forced to consider itself bound by the Convention of Sept. 15 when so many violations of other treaties had been accepted without a protest. He regretted that the Government which had expressed to the Senate its sympathy for Italian unity should not have sought an amicable arrangement with Italy. M. Jules Favre regarded the proposed conference as a chimera. A conference would necessarily be animated by the spirit of modern ideas, and the only result would be humiliation to the Papacy. M. Jules Favre concluded his speech by saying that the French Government had had the Encyclical torn to pieces by the Council of State, but had picked up the fragments to make cartridges for its Chassepot rifles. M. Guérout saw that, while at Rome the influence of Roman ideas pervaded the French, religion was simply in this case a political mask. The Roman question is not a rallying point for all those who regret the past. Leave the Pope to protect himself, and before the lapse of a fortnight he would have settled everything with Italy. Should the hope be relinquished that the French Government should transform itself in a liberal sense he, the speaker, declared he should become one of its most determined opponents. M. de Montier declared that the policy of the French Government had never been inconsistent, but had always had the same object in view—namely, to remove the Austrians from Italy, to establish Italian independence, to effect a conciliation between Italy as newly constituted and the Papacy in such a way as to guarantee the security of the Pontifical State. The convention of Sept. 15 was directed towards this last object. France had honourably carried out that convention. It was not true that the formation of the Antibes Legion was a violation of the convention by France. That act was in keeping with the convention and accepted as such by the Italian Government. Italy did not consider the publication of the Pope's Syllabus as a violation of the convention. Italy never was ignorant of the fact that France exacted the full and honourable execution of the convention of Sept. 15. Italy, on her part, had notified her firm resolution to carry it out, and France placed full confidence in her so doing. It was only when France found that the convention had been manifestly violated that she took upon herself the resolution of seeing the engagements that had been contracted carried out. M. de Montier could not state for certain whether the conference would meet or not. The following would be the line of conduct adopted by the Government in either hypothesis:—Should the conference meet, the French Government will examine at it, honourably and conscientiously, whether the state of affairs is such that the security of the Holy See may be regarded as assured. In such case France would order the abnormal occupation of the Papal States to cease. Should the conference not meet, the French Government would fall back upon the stipulations of the convention of Sept. 15. We should then say to the Italian Government, "Will you this time carry out those terms completely and give firm guarantees? We shall then a second time trust the Papacy to your loyalty." Such will be our line of conduct. The Government believes that by the expedition to Rome it has satisfied public opinion, and it entertains the hope of seeing its task accomplished with the support of the Legislative Body. M. Thiers followed, and avowed his opinion that any idea of reconciling Italy with the Papacy was an illusion.

ITALY.

Accounts from Italy represent that country to be in a most disturbed condition. Whatever may come of recent events in Rome, the immediate effect of them has been to bring the Government of King Victor Emmanuel into great disrepute. Telegrams and the letters of correspondents inform us that arrests are being daily made of persons said to be Mazzinians, and of others who are stated to be agents of the Bourbons. The arrest of twelve Mazzinian conspirators at Florence has led to the discovery of a plot for a general insurrection, having for object the destruction of the monarchy. Committees had been formed in all Italian cities, and an active propaganda was being carried on in the army and among working men. Brigandage is on the increase in the Campagna and in the frontier province of Terra di Lavoro. The Pontifical Government is preparing a memorial for communication to the European Powers, stating its ground of complaint against the Italian Government in the late Garibaldian invasion. The ceremony of the lowering of the French flag took place on Tuesday. All the French troops have now left Rome.

An Engraving on another page shows the field of Mentana after the combat, with some sad mementoes of the event still left upon it.

SPAIN.

A Royal decree has been issued convoking the Cortes for the 27th inst. It is rumoured that there is to be a further reduction of 1 per cent in the interest paid by the Government Deposit Bank.

AUSTRIA.

It is stated that the Imperial Cabinet has notified at Rome that the course of legislation will be pursued without regard to the obligations of the Concordat if the Pope declines to release the Emperor, as a Constitutional Sovereign, from the treaty into which he entered while ruling as an absolute Monarch.

RUSSIA.

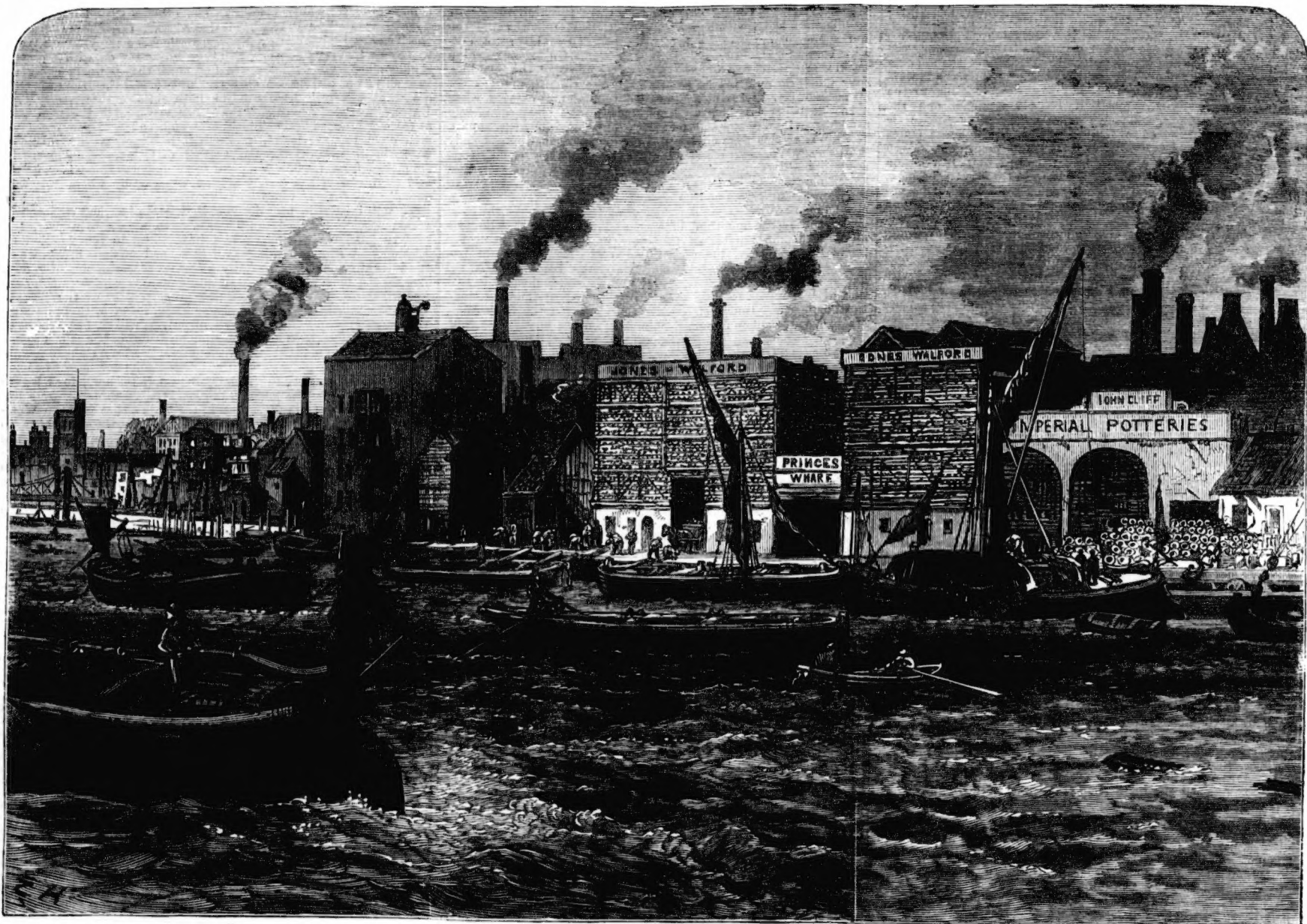
Archbishop Philarete, Metropolitan of the see of Moscow, died in Moscow on the afternoon of the 1st inst., after personally celebrating Divine service. The Archbishop had reached the age of eighty-three.

THE UNITED STATES.

Congress met on Nov. 23. The following is a summary of President Johnson's Message:—

"The expectation of an easy restoration of the Union has been disappointed by Congressional legislation. No Union exists, as our fathers understood it; but I still hope that all will finally concur in a settlement consistent with the country's interests and the Constitution." Mr. Johnson urges Congress to repeal the Act placing the South under military rule—a rule which, if continued, will increase taxation and may finally produce national bankruptcy. A standing army and an expenditure of over 200 million dollars per annum would probably be required to maintain the supremacy of negro government. Referring to the extent of the Executive duty to oppose unconstitutional legislation, Mr. Johnson says that if Congress should pass an Act, even through all the forms of law, to abolish a co-ordinate department of the Government of the country, the President must take the high responsibility of his office to save the life of the nation at all hazards. With regard to the currency

"Crinolines, chignons, peplums—they are all to be found here. It is very dreadful, no doubt, but it has its advantages; and many of the native women still refuse to succumb to the hideous tyranny of fashion, and retain their long, floating muslin robes, striped with various colours, and still allow their splendid black hair to fall over their shoulders, mingling with their tresses flowers or leaves which they pluck from the lovely trees and shrubs in their gardens. It is when they are on horseback and at full gallop, however, that these ladies are seen to advantage. Before mounting, they fasten a long silken or cotton scarf round their waists, which they twist round their legs, leaving the two ends trailing on the ground. When they are in the saddle, these two ends expand, and, as they gallop, float like two vast streamers behind them. An ample black mantilla falls over the



PREMISES IN COURSE OF DEMOLITION FOR THE UPPER PORTION OF THE THAMES EMBANKMENT, SOUTHERN SIDE.

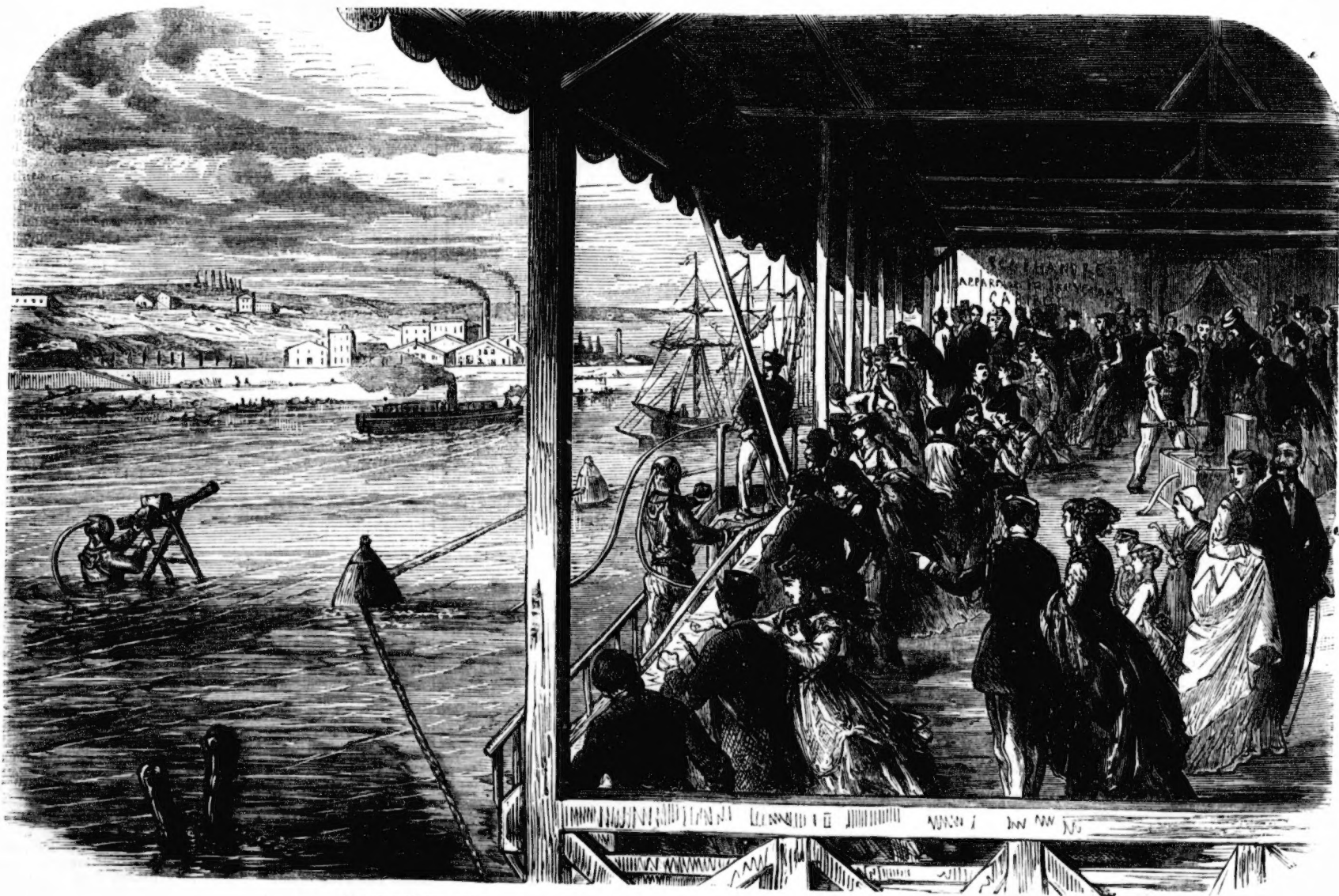
shoulders, and comes quite down to the horse's crupper. It is a very different thing to the scanty robes of European amazons—different and, as some think, more graceful."

The greatest proof of the alteration in native customs, however, may be seen in the throng that is waiting before the Royal residence, whence Kahameha is about to proceed to open the Sessions of his Parliament, attended by officers, outriders, and equerries, who follow

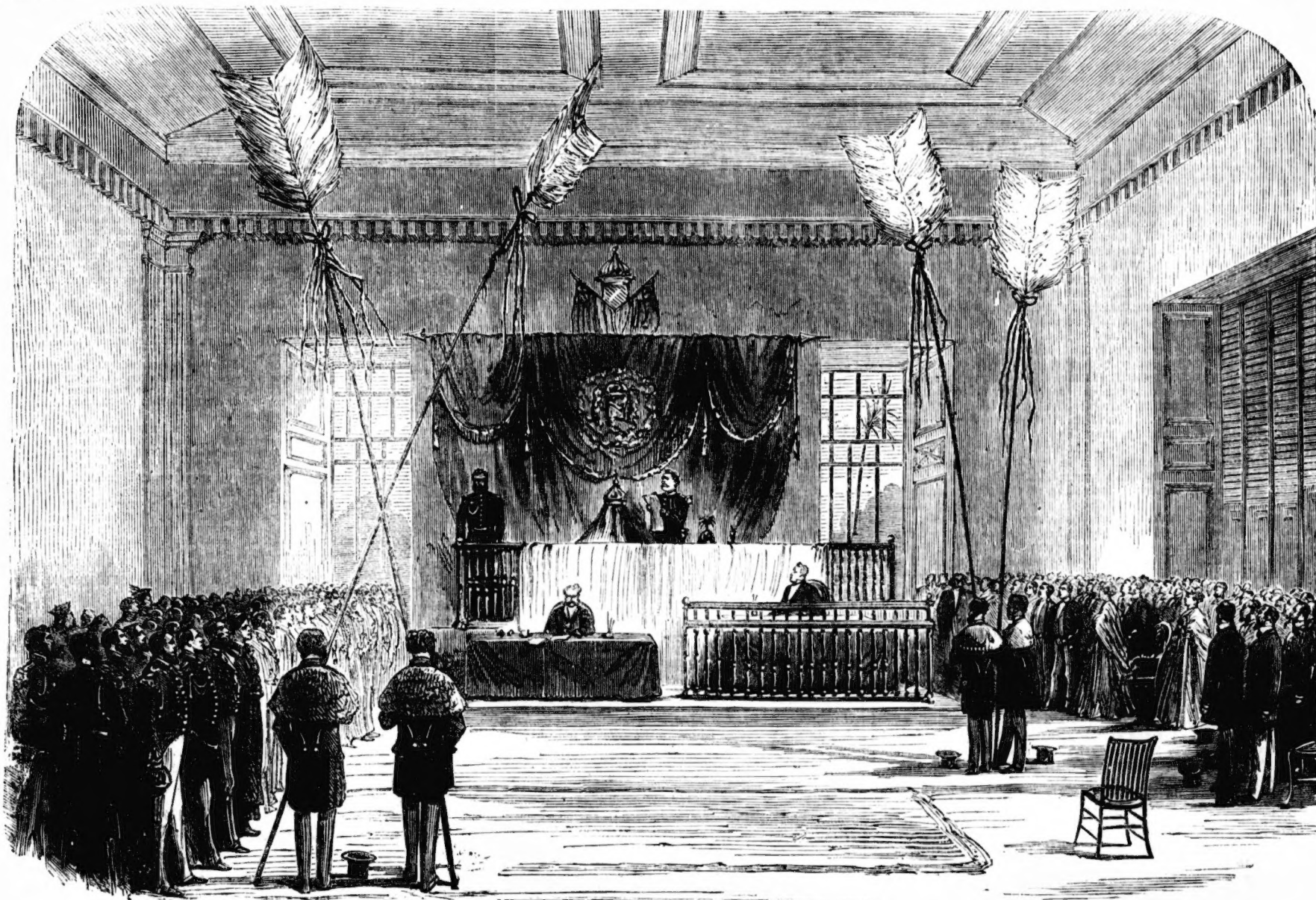
his neat open landau to the Session or Parliament House, where, in a plain room, surrounded by the officers of state, he announces the policy of the ensuing season. The only remnant of the old Conservative style of decoration are those queer feather-like fronds of cocoa-nut borne aloft by the native goldsticks in waiting. The costume is plain evening dress, a slight official uniform, to which the Ministers add a short cape, like that of the French Chancellerie.

MODEL FORTIFICATIONS IN THE GARDEN OF THE TUILERIES.

DURING the absence of the Imperial family from the Palace of the Tuileries the reserved garden is open to the public, and those who have taken advantage of this privilege during the past season may probably have come upon a portion of the grounds the appear-



EXPERIMENTS WITH DIVING APPARATUS IN THE SEINE, AT PARIS.—SEE PAGE 35.



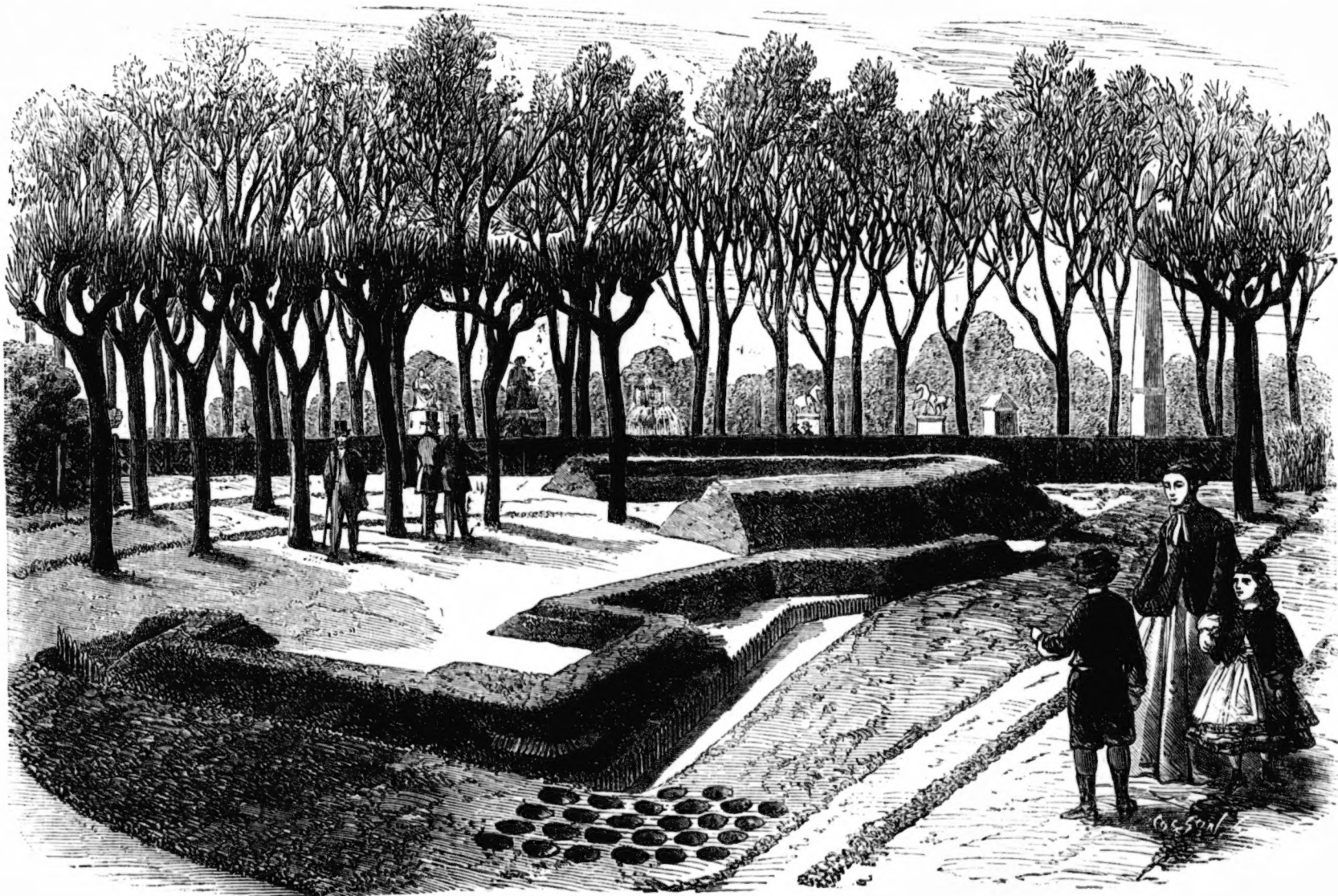
KING KAHEHAHIONE V. OPENING HIS PARLIAMENT IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE COURT HOUSE AT HONOLULU.

ance of which they may have found it difficult to explain. Unless the visitor knew where to look for it, however, he would scarcely discover this peculiar portion of the grounds; for it is a little out of the way of ordinary promenaders, at the end of the terrace and by the edge of the water, on the side nearest the Place de la Concorde. At this spot, in the inclosure belonging to the orangery, the Emperor has had constructed miniature fortifications which are intended to promote the military instruction of the Prince Imperial, and by standing on a chair at any part of the separating

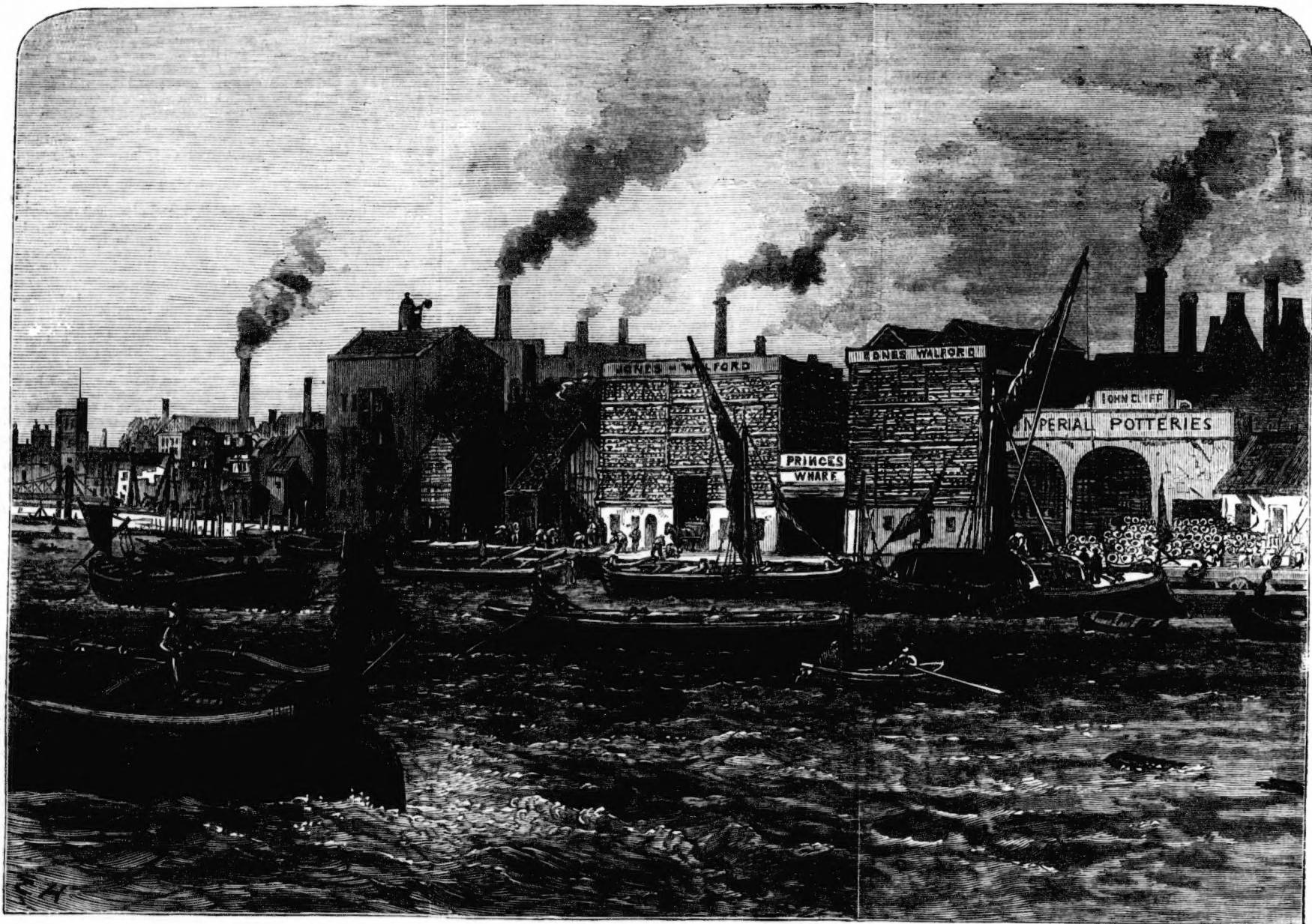
fence, they may be examined by any one who takes an interest in this mode of education.

They consist of two inclosures (enceintes) of turfed earth, and one of them is regular—that is to say, presents faces, the angles and sides of which are equal; the other is one of those temporary fortlets or redoubts used to guard passages, bridges, or any inlet where such a defence is necessary. The trench is furnished with a palisade of stakes for protecting the defending force from a surprise, and the approaches to the main trench are cut off by a

kind of draughtboard-shaped space, each square being represented by an excavation furnished with a sharp spike. During the stay of the Imperial family at the palace the young Prince comes to this place several times a week, under the direction of the officers of engineers attached to the Emperor's staff, to be instructed in this important part of military science, including castrametation, fortification, breastworks, redoubts, blockades, and all the rest of those warlike inventions which have so often been declared to be the best guarantees of peace.



MODEL FORTIFICATIONS IN THE TUILERIES GARDENS, PARIS.



PREMISES IN COURSE OF DEMOLITION FOR THE UPPER PORTION OF THE THAMES EMBANKMENT, SOUTHERN SIDE.

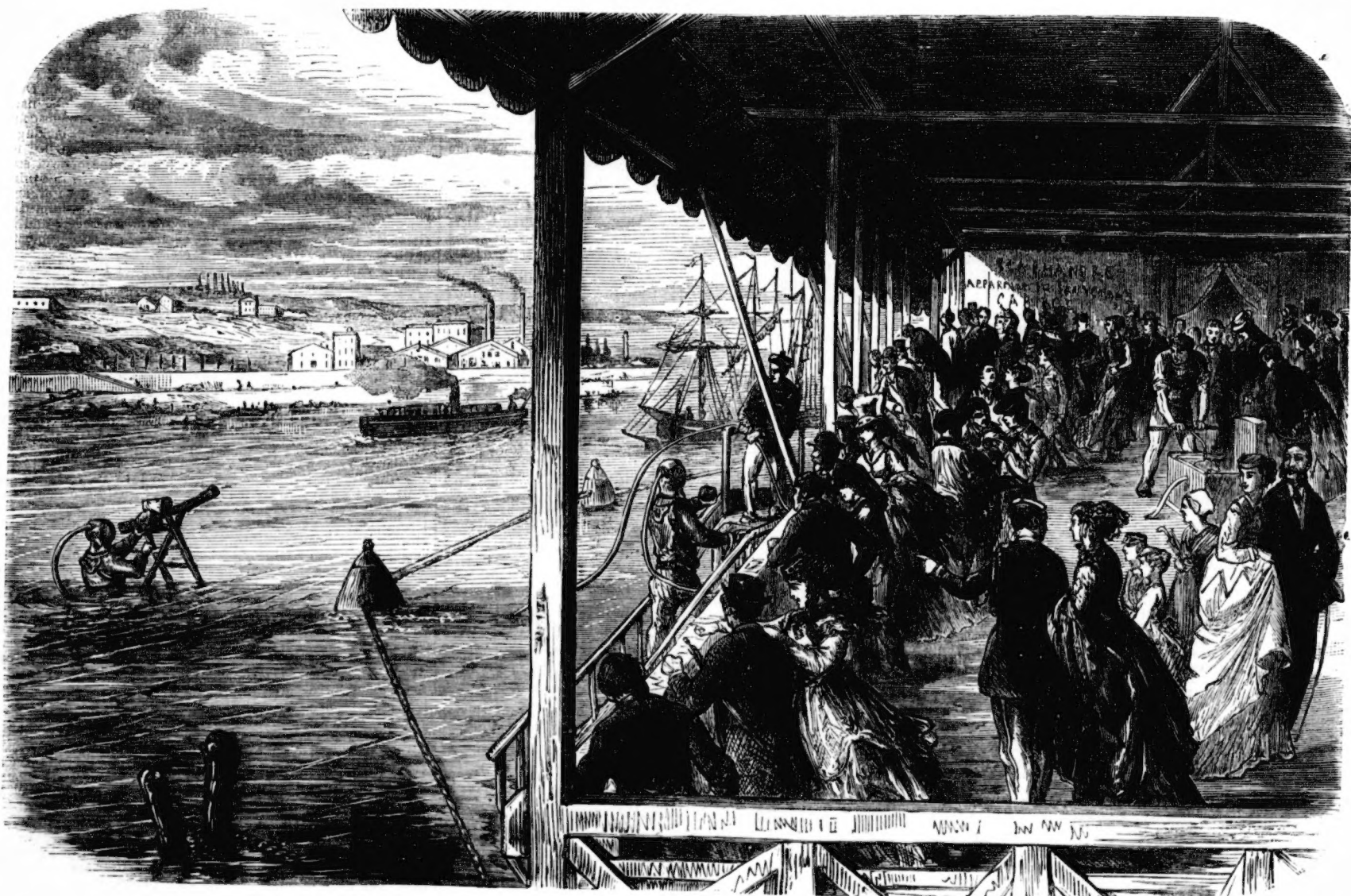
shoulders, and comes quite down to the horse's crupper. It is a very different thing to the scanty robes of European amazons—different and, as some think, more graceful."

The greatest proof of the alteration in native customs, however, may be seen in the throng that is waiting before the Royal residence, whence Kahameha is about to proceed to open the Sessions of his Parliament, attended by officers, outriders, and equerries, who follow

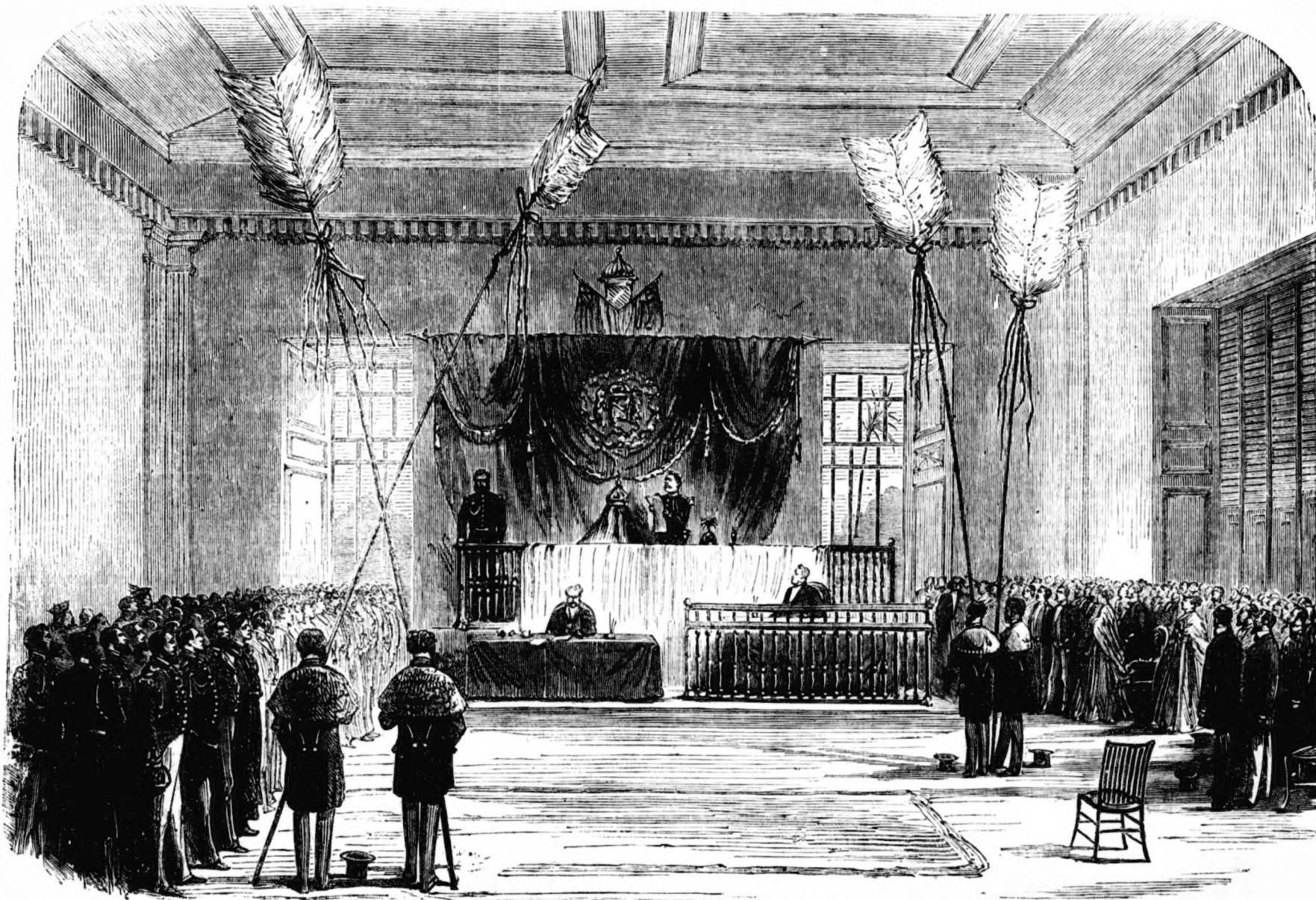
his neat open landau to the Session or Parliament House, where, in a plain room, surrounded by the officers of state, he announces the policy of the ensuing season. The only remnant of the old Conservative style of decoration are those queer feather-like fronds of cocoa-nut borne aloft by the native goldsticks in waiting. The costume is plain evening dress, a slight official uniform, to which the Ministers add a short cape, like that of the French Chancellerie.

MODEL FORTIFICATIONS IN THE GARDEN OF THE TUILERIES.

DURING the absence of the Imperial family from the Palace of the Tuileries the reserved garden is open to the public, and those who have taken advantage of this privilege during the past season may probably have come upon a portion of the grounds the appear-



EXPERIMENTS WITH DIVING APPARATUS IN THE SEINE, AT PARIS.—SEE PAGE 35.



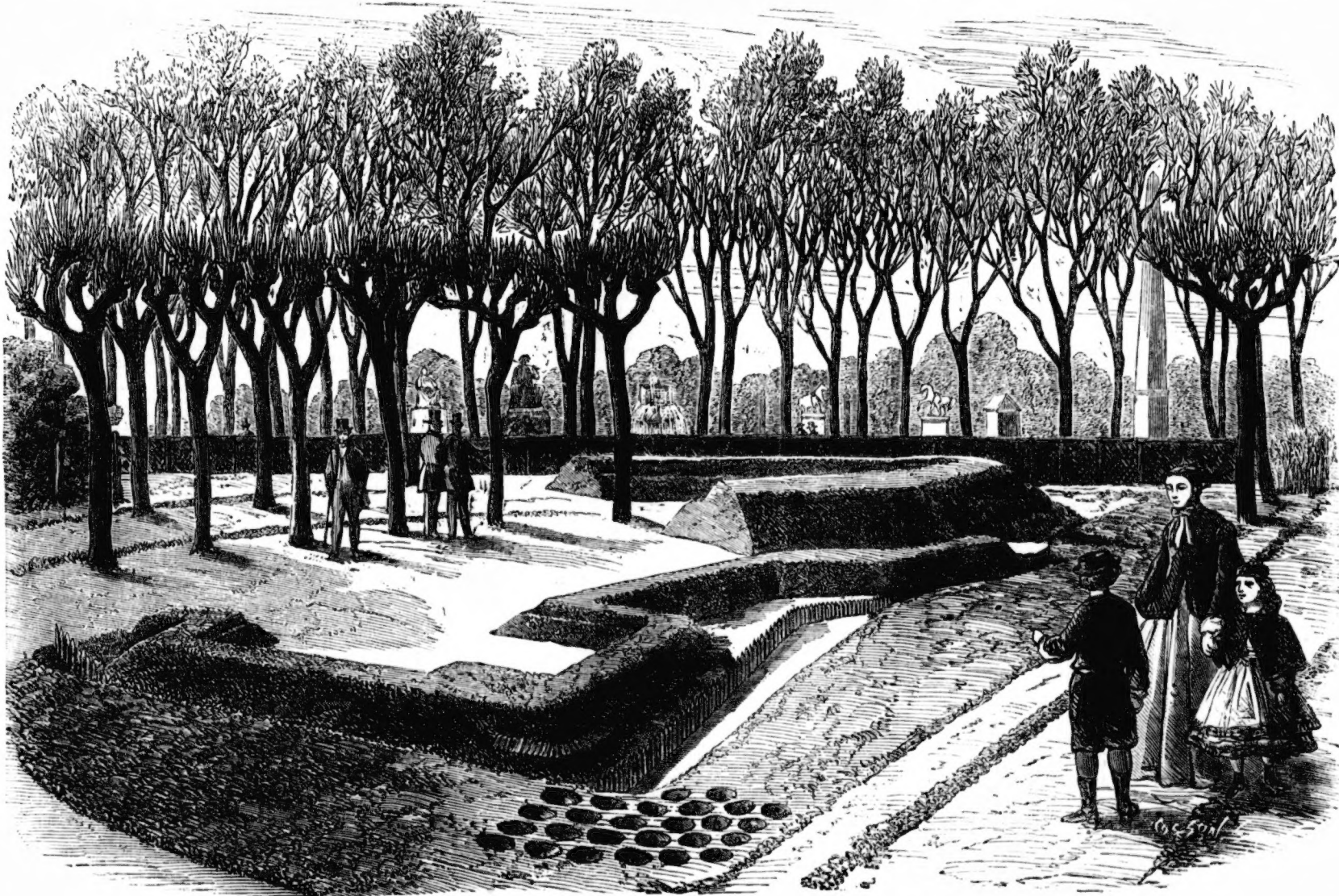
KING KAHEMAHA V. OPENING HIS PARLIAMENT IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE COURT HOUSE AT HONOLULU.

ance of which they may have found it difficult to explain. Unless the visitor knew where to look for it, however, he would scarcely discover this peculiar portion of the grounds; for it is a little out of the way of ordinary promenaders, at the end of the terrace and by the edge of the water, on the side nearest the Place de la Concorde. At this spot, in the inclosure belonging to the orangery, the Emperor has had constructed miniature fortifications which are intended to promote the military instruction of the Prince Imperial, and by standing on a chair at any part of the separating

fence, they may be examined by any one who takes an interest in this mode of education.

They consist of two inclosures (enceintes) of turfed earth, and one of them is regular—that is to say, presents faces, the angles and sides of which are equal; the other is one of those temporary fortlets or redoubts used to guard passages, bridges, or any inlet where such a defence is necessary. The trench is furnished with a palisade of stakes for protecting the defending force from a surprise, and the approaches to the main trench are cut off by a

kind of draughtboard-shaped space, each square being represented by an excavation furnished with a sharp spike. During the stay of the Imperial family at the palace the young Prince comes to this place several times a week, under the direction of the officers of engineers attached to the Emperor's staff, to be instructed in this important part of military science, including castrametation, fortification, breastworks, redoubts, blockades, and all the rest of those warlike inventions which have so often been declared to be the best guarantees of peace.



MODEL FORTIFICATIONS IN THE TUILERIES GARDENS, PARIS.

INNER LIFE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—NO. 320.

DR. BEKE.

DR. BEKE'S name has lately turned up in the House, and no doubt will turn up again. About a fortnight ago Mr. Layard, ex-Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, fiercely attacked Dr. Beke. Last week Mr. Newdegate generously defended him; and, either this week or when Parliament shall assemble again, Mr. Layard will have to reply. As, then, Dr. Beke is getting to be famous, we have thought it right to say a few words about him. Charles Tilson Beke, Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.G.S., is a great traveller, and rather a voluminous author. The doctor's travels have been mainly confined to Africa, and he probably knows as much about Abyssinia as any other man living. It is but natural, then, that he should now be so conspicuous above the horizon. We have often seen Dr. Beke about the lobby of late, and we will now sketch his portrait. He is a tall man—5 ft. 11 in., we should say; square built, and as erect as a pillar, albeit he is, as we have learned, over sixty-seven years of age. We should never have imagined him to be so old, for he walks firmly, and obviously has within him still a strong force of animal life. Indeed, it was only last year that this vigorous old man offered to go up to Gendarr, see the King of Abyssinia, and tender himself as a hostage if his Majesty would release the prisoners. On those square shoulders of his there is a large head, with forehead well developed; and at a glance you would guess that his face has long been exposed to a tropical sun. His hair and moustache, though nearly white, have the appearance of having been bleached by exposure to the weather rather than by age. Such is the personal appearance of Dr. Beke. His history may be soon given—at least, as much of it as we need give. At first glance you might think that Dr. Beke is a foreigner. But in truth he is an Englishman, belonging to an ancient family long settled at Bekesbourne, in Kent. And here we may notice, as indicative of the bitter animus which inspired Mr. Layard's attack, that he sneered at this word Bekesbourne, whence the doctor dates his letters. "I was," Mr. Layard said, "in the habit of receiving letters from a certain gentleman named Beke, dated from the classic region of Bekesbourne." Classic region of Bekesbourne! We should judge that Layard thought this is a manufactured name; but it is not. Bekesbourne is a parish in East Kent, three miles from Canterbury. In all probability, the name of the place, ages ago, was derived from the family. Why not? A vast number of our villages and hamlets took their names from the proprietors of the soil.

MR. LAYARD'S ATTACK UPON HIM.

It is now somewhat more than a fortnight ago since Layard fell foul of Dr. Beke. He was defending his own policy on this Abyssinian matter when he was Earl Russell's Under-Secretary, which, no doubt needs defending, for it was mainly whilst Layard was at the Foreign Office that the Abyssinian knot, which we are now about to cut with the sword, got tied. In his book Dr. Beke censures this policy, though by no means sharply; the censures, though, were gall and wormwood to Mr. Layard—fell, indeed, upon his naturally irritable temper like sparks upon gunpowder, and hence the explosion. He characterised Dr. Beke as "a very fussy, mischievous, intriguing, meddling, and troublesome person," whose "letters to the Foreign Office I always threw into the waste-paper basket;" and added, "there are always some such mischievous parasites, who live upon rotten and barbarous countries, who try to set up interest, either from motives of vanity, of adventure, or some such selfish motive." Wild, reckless language this; but when Mr. Layard came to notice Dr. Beke's book, he was still more reckless:—"A more mendacious book," he said, "never was written; and from beginning to end it is nothing but one tissue of falsehoods and mis-statements." And, further, he charged Dr. Beke with having insinuated that Mr. Rassam had misappropriated money; and, lastly, he (i.e., Layard) plainly insinuates that Dr. Beke had misappropriated money. Now, surely all this is in very bad taste, to say the least of it; but we are bound to say that it is rather characteristic of the ex-Under-Secretary. He is naturally explosive. He has been in office many years, and one would have thought that he would have been by this time trained and broken to due official prudence and reserve. But it is not so. When angry, as he obviously was on this occasion, he seizes the bit in his teeth, and kicks, and plunges, and scampers about in the wildest manner. And here it is worthy of notice that everybody whom he attacked on that night were unable to reply. He pitched into poor Consul Plowden, who has been dead seven or eight years—killed in Abyssinia. He fell foul of Consul Cameron, who is in prison at Magdala, if he also be not dead. And though Dr. Beke sat under the gallery, he, of course, had to bear the pelting of this pitiless storm in silence.

LIBERTY OF SPEECH.

Strangers, ignorant of the ways and rules of the House, may ask, as, indeed, some have asked, Whether the ex-Under-Secretary was not out of order? To this we promptly answer, No. If Mr. Layard had said of a member, or even insinuated, that he was mendacious, he (Mr. L.) would in a moment have been sharply pulled up by Mr. Speaker. The rules of the House regulating debates are so strict that even imputations of bad motives, to members, are out of order. But the House takes no care of the reputation of strangers. A member may attack a stranger in the most violent language; call him liar, scoundrel, thief, or any other opprobrious name. Speaking figuratively, a member may break every bone in a stranger's skin—spit upon him—spurn him—and leave him, as it were, dead—and still be in order. And, moreover, if the said stranger were to wait for his slanderer in the lobby and retort upon him, or do the same even in a private letter, he would be immediately summoned to the bar of the House, and, failing then to apologise with satisfactory humility, would be arrested by the Serjeant-at-Arms and committed to prison. Mr. Read, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, a few years ago wrote a private letter to Sir Frederick Smith commenting upon and denying a statement made in the House by Sir Frederick; a very innocent thing to do, one would think; but it was a breach of privilege; and, at the instance of Sir Frederick, Mr. Read had to appear at the bar and apologise. Our readers will see, then, that, though one member may not say anything offensive about another member, he may hurl a whole vocabulary of abuse at the head of a stranger. This is what we call "liberty of speech." It will doubtless seem to our readers more like license than liberty. We concur with those who think that this license ought to be now somewhat restrained, and in a few words we will give the reason why. For centuries the House of Commons sat with closed doors; no reporting was allowed, and no stranger was admitted to hear the debates; and what members said there was confined to the knowledge of very few. But all this is altered now. Reporting the debates, though not formally recognised by the House, is really a Parliamentary institution. The House provides a gallery for the reporters; they are admitted thereto by the Serjeant-at-Arms; and, in the case of Hansard's "Debates," the House pays an annual subsidy to the publisher of that work; and what is said in the House is not now heard merely by the members, but is, by the sanction of the House, sent daily on the wings of the wind to every part of the civilised globe; and the charge made in such strong language by Mr. Layard was, on the following morning, read by a million readers, and has by this time found its way into every European country where Dr. Beke is known and respected, and will very soon be in Abyssinia itself. Now this, we venture to say, is very unfair. It is like fighting a man with his legs and hands tied. Upon the questions in dispute between Mr. Layard and Dr. Beke we say nothing here; but we venture to assert that this license of speech ought to be restrained, and that no member should be allowed to speak with more license of strangers than he can of members, or, at all events, than he would do at any other meeting of gentlemen if the accused were present, with equal liberty of speech.

NEWDEGATE'S DEFENCE.

On Friday week, as most of our readers are aware, Mr. Newdegate rose to call attention to Mr. Layard's attack upon Dr. Beke. The doctor is Mr. Newdegate's personal friend; and, with his charac-

teristically chivalrous generosity, he determined, if possible, to rebut the charges which had been made against the doctor in the place where they were made. This, he knew, would be a difficult task; for, in strict compliance with rule, it could not be done, as it is an order of the House that no member be allowed to refer to a former debate. True, the Speaker relaxes the rule "when a member wishes by explanation to clear up a misrepresentation of his character." But Newdegate did not want to clear up a misrepresentation of his character, but one of the character of a stranger, and it was very doubtful whether Mr. Speaker would allow him to do it. But, nothing venture nothing have. Mr. Newdegate would try; and if any man could do it, Mr. Newdegate could, for, in the first place, he is a great favourite in the House; secondly, he knows the rules and practice of the House well; and, lastly, he is very cool, adroit, and persevering; and he succeeded, though not without some difficulty. And it really was interesting to watch the skill with which he steered amongst the shoals around him. Thrice he was warned by Mr. Speaker that he was on dangerous ground; but he did not stop, as a less practised hand would have done, but skillfully, by a slight shift of the helm, as it were, sheered round the obstacle, clearing it by a hair. Mr. Speaker the while looked perplexed and restless, and every minute we thought that he would rise and resolutely put a stop to all talk about the matter; but Mr. Newdegate so cleverly avoided any flagrant appearance of infraction of the rule, though no doubt he offended against the spirit of it, that Mr. Speaker allowed him to go on to the end. When Mr. Newdegate sat down Mr. Darby Griffith attempted to continue the debate, but upon this attempt Mr. Speaker put his foot at once.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT.

On the same evening a cheer from the Liberal side of the House heralded the conqueror at Manchester, Mr. Jacob Bright, to the table. Not to be sworn; but, "being one of the people called Quakers," as the Journal has it, to make "the affirmation required by law." Quakers are not required to swear as other people do. More than 150 years ago they were allowed to make an affirmation instead of taking an oath. No harm has ever come of this relaxation of the law. And one would think that it is time to abolish altogether the barbarous practice of swearing. At the assembling of a new Parliament we have often seen a batch of twenty gentlemen sworn together, and as they, at the bidding of the official fagman, all lifted the Testament to their lips, and, as they profanely say at the Old Bailey, "smacked calveskin," it always struck us that this was a scene more befitting a barbarous country than civilised Christian England. Mr. Jacob Bright is not at all like his brother, whose portrait is familiar to every Englishman. The new member is taller and much thinner. Moreover, he wears a beard and moustache. Of his powers as a speaker we know nothing, except from report. But Manchester men say that he is not an orator, like his brother. He will very likely prove to be a far greater power than most of the members who are accustomed to address the House.

THE TYCOON OF JAPAN'S BROTHER.

On Tuesday night the brother of the Tycoon of Japan, with his suite, appeared in the House. By the special request of our Foreign Secretary, his Highness was received in form at the door by Lord Charles Russell, and was conducted to his place in the Ambassadors' Gallery by the Assistant Serjeant. A very diminutive person is the Tycoon's brother; but as he lifted his hand to his forehead when Lord Charles bowed in his courtly way, there was clearly discernible an ease, self-possession, and even dignity, that only a sense of high birth and position can give. The Prince did not stay long.

Imperial Parliament.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE DISFRANCHISED BOROUGHS.

Mr. OTWAY called attention to the anomalous position in which the four boroughs disfranchised by the Reform Act were placed. The disfranchisement was only to take effect at the close of this present Parliament. Therefore, should a vacancy arise for Totnes or Yarmouth, the Speaker would have to issue his writ, and a gentleman might be returned to the House by the very electors who were declared to be so corrupt that they no longer deserved to have votes. The anomaly arose from not making the disfranchisement take effect from and after the passing of the Act.

After a few words from Serjeant GASELLE the subject dropped.

THE RATEPAYING CLAUSES OF THE REFORM BILL.

Mr. C. FORSTER asked whether every elector must be put upon the rate-book, whether he wished it or not; and whether payment of rates by the landlord would not, in point of law, be deemed payment by the tenant. He showed the oppressiveness of the Act as it was at present understood.

Lord HENLEY insisted that the ratepaying clauses would have to be repealed, and urged that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into their operation.

Mr. HENLEY contended that Lord Henley was not well informed upon the matter, and insisted that the ratepaying clauses put the poor rates on the right basis.

Mr. GLADSTONE defended Lord Henley, and said that he had so often expressed his opinion on the question that he would not say any more on it now. It was not a matter which affected his constituency, but it was one of serious moment to many places. If the Act was found to be oppressive in this particular, he had no doubt the people would very soon insist on an amendment.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL, in reference to the ratepaying clause, stated distinctly that no obligation was imposed upon the occupier of paying his rates in person. Payment by the landlord would be in point of law payment by the tenant.

Sir R. COLLIER had no doubt this ruling was right, but wished they had heard it last Session, when a great party was deluded into supporting the bill on the assurance that it required a personal payment of the rates.

Lord JOHN MANNERS declared that the bill had never been recommended by the Government on the ground that it would require personal payment of rates.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The House of Commons met on Saturday for the purpose of forwarding bills a stage. The Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Amendment Bill was read the third time and passed; and the East London Museum (Site) Bill, having passed through Committee, was read the third time and passed. Two measures introduced to make provision for the Abyssinian expedition—namely, the Income-tax Bill, imposing an additional penny income tax; and the Consolidated Fund (£2,000,000) Bill, to authorise the advance of money out of the Consolidated Fund for the purposes of the war—were read the second time.

A notice was given by Mr. DARBY GRIFFITH that he would move in Committee to exempt persons with incomes not exceeding £200 a year from payment of the additional income tax.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

EDUCATION.

Earl RUSSELL moved a series of resolutions, of which he had given notice, on the subject of education generally throughout England, especially with reference to the application of the revenues of the Universities for that purpose, and also asking for the appointment by the Crown of a Minister for Education, with a seat in the Cabinet. In doing so, Earl Russell said he did not wish to trouble the House with figures, of which there were but too many, to prove the necessity of the resolutions he moved. A very few, however, would be sufficient, and these data might be found in the marriage registers of the country, which showed that of the whole population of England and Wales there were actually no less than 30 per cent that could not write their own names. What he proposed was not new to their Lordships, nor was there anything of difficulty in carrying it out. It was done in Prussia, it was done in France, and to a great extent—certainly to a much greater extent than in any part of England—it was done in Ireland and Scotland. Whether such a scheme was to be carried out by rates or taxes did not much matter. The great point was to make the general principle universal in its application; and as rates and taxes were levied irrespective of creed, so also should the benefits of the national education be extended and open without restrictions of any kind to people of all denominations. As well might all people be compelled to pay water rates and the water only be supplied to members of the Established Church as to levy, according to our present system, a general tax for education, from the benefits of which all classes of Dissenters were now virtually excluded. After quoting the opinions in favour of such a plan of such lawyers and statesmen as Chief Justice Holt, Lords Halifax, Somers, Devonshire, and an ancestor of Lord Derby in the time of Queen Anne, Earl Russell went on to say that he thought national schools should be exempted from the duty

of teaching any peculiar religious tenets whatever, and he did not believe for a moment that the establishment of secular schools would have any effect in rendering the rising generations of the future less pious. Certainly, in this respect of promoting education, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge might be made much more useful to the nation by the removal of restrictions as to creeds, and by a better distribution of their large revenues in connection with the purpose for which those seats of learning were originally endowed. After dwelling on the connection of that subject with the measure of Parliamentary Reform so lately passed, and asserting that the whole future of this country depended on the adoption of a large, a wise, and an unsectarian system of education, Lord Russell concluded by moving his resolutions.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH felt much difficulty in replying to the speech of the noble Earl, owing to the absence of any definite and distinct propositions with which he could deal. If the resolutions were a challenge thrown out to the Government, with the view of ascertaining what they intended to do on the question of education, then the moment selected by the noble Earl for the purpose was certainly most inopportune; because Parliament had been called together with a totally different object, and there was no time in the present Session for dealing with the matter. Not being able to give his assent to the whole of the resolutions, the noble Duke moved the "previous question," which, after a few words from Earl Russell, was agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE CONFERENCE.

Sir H. BARRON asked whether the Foreign Secretary had consented to have England represented at the proposed conference on Italian affairs, and on what terms.

Lord STANLEY replied that he had announced on the first day of the Session the nature and purport of the answer which, on behalf of the Government, he had given to the French Government in reply to their invitation to attend the conference. To that answer he adhered, and he had not qualified it in any respect.

INTERPRETATION OF THE REFORM BILL.

Mr. GOSCHEN put a string of questions in reference to the operation of the new Reform Act's ratepaying clause, which the ATTORNEY-GENERAL answered seriatim. The learned gentleman carefully guarded what he said by the avowal that it was only the expression of his individual opinion.

THE PECUNY BOROUGHS.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL obtained leave to bring in a bill to regulate the issue of writs for the election of members of Parliament in certain cases. The effect of the measure is to suspend the issue of writs in the cases of Totnes, Great Yarmouth, Reigate, and Lancaster, in the event of a vacancy arising in the representation of any of these boroughs.

SUPPLY.

The Income Tax Bill and the Consolidated Fund (£2,000,000) Bill were passed through Committee.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Lord DUFFERIN, in moving for copies of the police reports relative to the late Fenian processions in Ireland, alluded in strongly condemnatory terms to the conduct of a portion of the public press in representing Allen and his companions in guilt as political martyrs, and urged the Government to administer the Party Processions Act throughout Ireland with firmness and impartiality, and without regard to either religious or political opinions.

The Earl of DERBY observed that the Government had never hesitated to enforce the law with impartiality, and he deeply regretted that any portion of the press should have treated the late executions at Manchester as dictated by political considerations. The offence for which Allen and his fellow-convicts had suffered was not a political one, but wilful murder; and it was without any vindictive feeling that the Government came to the conclusion that it was their imperative duty, after the leniency they had shown last year, and which had been so abused, to let the law take its course. The motion was then withdrawn; and the Totnes, &c., Writs Bill, having been brought up from the Commons, was read the first time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CHURCH RATES.

Mr. GILPIN, having asked whether the Government intended to introduce a measure this Session for the abolition of church rates, was informed by Mr. Secretary Hardy that they did not.

On the motion of Mr. HARCROFT, leave was given to bring in a bill for the abolition of church rates; to Mr. HUBBARD, a bill for the regulation of church rates.

ADJOURNMENT—ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Lord STANLEY said that on Saturday next the adjournment of the House would be moved till the 13th of February.

The Income Tax Bill and the Consolidated Fund (£2,000,000) Bill were read the third time and passed. The Totnes, &c., Writs Bill was read the second time, and, the standing orders having been suspended, the bill passed through its remaining stages.

ROMAN CATHOLIC PRISONERS.

On Mr. W. HUNT moving that the House at its rising should adjourn to Thursday.

Mr. MAGUIRE directed attention to the inadequacy of the accommodation provided in Totnall-fields House of Correction for the religious instruction of the Roman Catholic prisoners, who constituted one third of the entire number confined in that institution.

After some discussion, the motion for adjournment was agreed to.

COMMUTATION OF SENTENCES.

Mr. NEWDEGATE called attention to the practice now so common of urging the remission of capital sentences, and the consequent uncertainty of punishment. He did not advocate any immediate alteration in the law, but he desired that Parliament should be placed in possession of the information which was necessary to enable it to judge of the operation of the law upon the criminal classes, and thus tend to the greater security of life and property.

Mr. Secretary HARDY opposed the motion, on the ground that the information asked for would not only not be of the slightest advantage, but was rather calculated to mislead; whilst it would certainly interfere with the exercise of the Royal prerogative of mercy.

The motion was then withdrawn.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The House sat for a few minutes, and pushed forward the bills which required attention.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION.

The Earl of DERBY rose to move that this House do concur in the following resolution, communicated by the Commons—viz., "That her Majesty, having directed a military expedition to be dispatched against Abyssinia, consisting mainly of troops, both European and native, at present maintained out of the revenues of India, the ordinary pay of such troops, as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable, provided that if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other European or native forces or vessels, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such forces or vessels shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said expedition. The noble Earl observed that the House of Commons had been almost unanimous in supporting the expedition her Majesty was determined to send to Abyssinia for the rescue of her subjects. He need not, therefore, go largely into the defence of the expedition. The first point was, where should the expedition be sent from, and it was almost intuitively decided that it should go from India. The Indian troops were better adapted to traverse the country than any troops dispatched from England. Then came the question whether the Government was right in rendering available the Indian revenues for the purposes of the expedition. The noble Earl read extracts to show that there was a right vested in the Government to use the troops under special circumstances. It is the undoubted prerogative of the Sovereign to enter upon war, and it belongs to the House of Commons to make provision for any war thus declared. India would now pay the same amount towards the expenses of the war as her troops would cost when in India under ordinary circumstances. The noble Earl complimented the late Chancellor of the Exchequer for his considerate support to her Majesty's Government in various matters connected with the expedition. He now asked their Lordships to concur in the resolution passed by the Commons.

The Earl of ELLENBOROUGH concurred in the necessity for the expedition, admitting the justice of the war. The law of nations had been violated, and must be upheld. His firm impression was that the expedition never could succeed. A blockade successfully carried out might have brought the King to submission.

After some further discussion the resolution was agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE GABS OF THE METROPOLIS.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE gave notice that he should move for an inquiry into the system of cab licenses and duties.

Lord ELCHO gave notice that, if the Government did not introduce a measure for the purpose, he should move for a Select Committee to inquire into the cab conveyance of the metropolis.

ABYSSINIA.

The remainder of the sitting was occupied in a desultory conversation respecting the expedition, and listening to some explanations from Mr. Layard respecting Dr. Beke.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1867.

THE PLAQUE OF CLERKS.

ON Dec. 3 was issued to the public what is probably the shortest official document ever drawn up. It costs one half-penny, and its contents are, literally, as follow:—"Names of the clerks in the Foreign Office who act as agents for officers holding diplomatic or consular appointments under the Crown." Then follow five unknown surnames, for we are not even furnished with the Christian names of the clerks performing the important duties of agents. It was not to be expected that any information would be given as to the nature of the work which these agents are required to do; but Parliament and the public will have to be enlightened on the subject before long, and it will be interesting to know how much the agency fees annually amount to, and also, and above all, on what pretext they are levied. Of all our public offices the one that bears most resemblance to a Continental *bureau* is the aptly-designated "Foreign Office." Affairs are there conducted much as we believe them to be conducted in Russia, Austria, and other countries where bureaucratic traditions are so strong that even the will of the Sovereign, despot as he may be, cannot prevail against them. The "Office" forms a mysterious power, into the workings of which it is nothing less than profanity for the outside public to inquire. Its proper business is the reception and registering of despatches and reports from her Majesty's representatives abroad, and the transmission to them of the instructions issued by the Foreign Minister at home. Nothing can be, or at least nothing ought to be, simpler. The clerks at the Foreign Office need not, as a rule, have any knowledge of foreign languages, though now and then the duty may devolve on one of them of translating a treaty from the French. But even for such a work as that there is a regular official translator; and if the Foreign Office clerks can write good English, that is the most that need be expected from them. They have a great deal of copying to do, and they are required to make abridgments or *précis* of voluminous documents. If they would strictly confine themselves to *précis*-writing, copying, and the folding of letters and despatches (which they do to perfection), it would be well for them and for the country; but, unfortunately, they consider themselves intrusted with the direction of the foreign policy of England, and really act in accordance with that delusion. They could not conveniently take upon themselves the opening of negotiations with foreign Powers; but, negotiations once commenced, they constitute themselves judges as to what is important and what unimportant in the communications that reach them from abroad, and coolly consign those which they deem unimportant to the waste-paper basket. It is supposed that the Foreign-Office waste-paper basket received the celebrated letter from the King of Abyssinia to the Queen, or it may have been docketed and carefully put away on some particular shelf reserved for such communications as, in the opinion of the Foreign Office, are not worth forwarding to the persons, however illustrious, to whom they happen to be addressed. In any case, there is one letter from King Theodore unproduced and unaccounted for. It reached the Foreign Office, and it should, on its way to her Majesty, have passed through the hands of Mr. Layard; but Mr. Layard declared the other night that he never saw

it; and we can only suppose that the office, in its wisdom, suppressed it as a thing of no interest or value. Of course, the Whitehall clerks had no intention of involving their country in war; but the neglect with which King Theodore was treated in the matter of his letters has helped to cause the war in which England is now engaged, and for this neglect the said clerks are, to a great extent, answerable.

Attention having been seriously directed to the internal arrangements of the Foreign Office, it is to be hoped that they will now be thoroughly reformed. Hitherto, the occupation of Foreign-Office clerks has been thought rather an idle one; but it is not idleness, it is undue activity and a determination to interfere in matters beyond their sphere, that those gentlemen have really to be reproached with. One can now understand how it was that Talleyrand, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was so particular in cautioning his subordinates against an "excess of zeal." Secretaries and clerks are not content to do secretaries' and clerks' work, and that only. To be perpetually transcribing and inclosing vexes their proud spirit. They also must have opinions; and, at the risk of endangering the State, must be allowed to act upon them! The sooner these notions are dispelled the better. Besides having responsible Ministers, we must have responsible clerks; and clerks who go beyond their duty must be made to answer for the offence. To deal with the Foreign Office is known to be no easy matter. The political Foreign Secretary who reigns for a few brief Sessions in Parliament is in many respects at the mercy of the official Foreign-Office clerk who governs permanently at Whitehall. The permanent secretary and the permanent assistant secretary support the existing system, which in their opinion is perfect; and any Minister who presumes to call them to account, or even to criticise the manner in which business is conducted in the office, may be so inconvenienced and worried that unless he happens to be a man of unusually strong character, he ends by falling in with their views and transacts business in their fashion, so that he may not be prevented, by their planned delays, from transacting any business at all.

The agency abuse is a mere detail, but it should be reformed all the same. A century, or half a century, ago it was quite natural that diplomatists and consuls abroad should appoint agents in London: first, that they might obtain payment of their salaries (which was not always an easy matter), and, secondly, to execute commissions for them of various kinds. At present, however, Government officials are paid with punctuality; and if an official doing duty abroad orders a suit of clothes by letter, his tailor will be only too happy to send it out to him. There is nothing an agent at the Foreign Office can do which cannot be done as well by a London tradesman or a London banker; but the custom of taking 10s. from everyone employed abroad in the diplomatic and consular service has become deeply rooted; and even if the clerks cede their pretended right to shape the course of our foreign policy, they will make a desperate stand for the agency fees. It may, perhaps, be asked why the members of the foreign service pay a tax by which no one profits except those who receive the money. The answer is that, if they wish to have their letters and parcels forwarded, they *must* pay it. They must pay it, too, if they wish to stand well with "the office"—that is to say, if they do not wish their work to be unnoticed, their services to be unrecorded, their applications for promotion to remain without reply.

The attention of Parliament has been called to what is comparatively but a small injustice; but if a commission be appointed to inquire into the agency system, it can scarcely make its report without calling attention to the system on which the business of the Foreign Office is conducted generally.

ANTICIPATED NEGRO OUTBREAK IN JAMAICA.—A telegram from Jamaica, dated Nov. 15, which appeared in the *New York Herald*, says:—"There is fear of another negro riotous and revolutionary outbreak. The parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East is threatened on the present occasion, as in the case of the former rebellion. There are as many as 400 negroes disciplined according to military practice and ready to take up arms. The Protestant Rector of St. David's parish has been already admonished by the leaders of the coloured force. A great panic exists all over the island in consequence. The Government and executive officers are on the alert. The white population is seriously menaced. Severe shocks of earthquakes were experienced on the days of the 11th and 12th inst., about the hour of noon. The Morris estate has been damaged. A chimney fell from one of the dwellings with the force of the shock. There were no lives lost."

THE GALES.—The gales which have for the last few days been sweeping our coasts have occasioned great destruction of property and loss of life. We regret to hear that the Gorleston life-boat Rescue upset by coming in contact with a lugger on entering the harbour at Yarmouth and that twenty-six persons, including part of the wrecked crew, were drowned, only four being saved. It is said that the Rescue is a salvage-boat belonging to the beachmen at Gorleston, and that it is the same boat which capsized under similar circumstances two years ago, and with a like fatal result. Surely "life-boat" is a misnomer for such a vessel! Amongst the many thrilling incidents, narrow escapes, and sad catastrophes, with which the gale of Sunday night and subsequent day has filled the northern papers, there is one reported by the *Daily Express* of Newcastle worthy of especial notice. On Monday afternoon a small but powerful steam-tug, the Pearl, which had been out in the Channel looking for vessels to assist, was observed to make for the Tyne. Again and again the breathless spectators on the shore thought she was lost, but breaker after breaker was weathered until, just as she was rounding the end of the pier, a tremendous sea burst over her, and when she next came into view it was observed, to the astonishment of everyone, that she was bottom upmost. All hands were lost.

THE NEW BISHOP OF LICHFIELD.—We have great pleasure in announcing that the Bishop of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn, has accepted the bishopric of Lichfield. It had been offered to him as soon as it became vacant, but he at first thought the claims of his distant see required him to decline the more comfortable position of an English Bishop. Upon mature consideration, the prospects of increased usefulness prevailed, and we may congratulate "the Black Country" on having obtained a missionary Bishop who, though a brilliant scholar and the ideal of a British gentleman, has proved his ability to deal with men and to command their sympathies in one of the most difficult fields of Christian enterprise.—*Times*. The Rev. Dr. G. A. Selwyn is a son of the late Mr. William Selwyn, of Richmond, Surrey, and is a brother of Sir C. J. Selwyn, M.P., the Solicitor-General, and of the Rev. Dr. W. Selwyn, the Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. He was born in 1809, and was educated at Eton, whence he proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. degree when he was second in the first class in classics, and twenty-first junior optime in the mathematical tripos. He became pastor of Eton and Curate of the parish church of Windsor, and in 1841 was created first Bishop of New Zealand. At that time the diocese embraced the whole of New Zealand, but it has since been subdivided, and there are now Bishops of Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Otago, Warapa, and the missionary Bishop of the Milanesian or South Pacific Isles.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE QUEEN has sent a donation to Mrs. Elizabeth Watson, of Armthwaite, a widow who has attained the remarkable age of ninety-two years, and has lived to see the fifth generation in her own family.

LORD ELPHINSTONE has been elected a representative peer of Scotland, in the room of the late Baron Polwarth.

MR. DISRAELI is still suffering from lumbago, which confines him to his room; but his general health is good. Mrs. Disraeli is gradually improving in health.

LADY ESMONDE, widow of the late Right Hon. Sir Thomas Esmonde, has bequeathed the sum of £30,000 to the board of Trinity College, Dublin, to build and endow a classical school in the county of Waterford.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL has granted the necessary license for the Smithfield Club show to be held at the Agricultural Hall from Dec. 9 to Dec. 13.

THE HEAD MASTERSHIP OF HAILEYBURY COLLEGE is vacant. The salary is £1800 per annum. The appointment is in the gift of the council.

ELIZABETH VEROMQUE, the heaviest woman in Paris, has just died. She weighed 520 English pounds. It appears that she attained this extraordinary obesity when quite young.

TWO SMITHS employed at the Great Northern Railway Works at Doncaster quarrelled the other day, and one of them struck the other on the head with a hammer, killing him on the spot.

THE LORD ADVOCATE was elected member for Thetford without opposition on Monday. There are only 237 registered electors in this small borough. Mr. Baring conveniently retired to make way for his Lordship, who wanted a seat.

THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION progresses favourably—that is to say, a good camping-ground has been found where water is abundant, but forage scanty. The road by which the forces are to go into Abyssinia has not yet been determined upon.

MISME FRIGARD, condemned to hard labour for life for the murder of M^{me}. Mertens in the wood at Fontainebleau, has just been delivered in prison of twins—a boy and a girl.

IN CALIFORNIA grapevines are planted about 1000 to the acre. In four years each vine yields half a gallon of wine, or 500 gallons to the acre. In 1865, 40,000,000 vines were planted in California. The yield in 1866 was 8,000,000 gallons, and the value about 6,000,000 dols.

THE GRAND CANAL OF CHINA, which has been gradually drying up since 1857, has now become utterly impassable, vessels drawing a few inches only being unable to find water to float them.

AN AUSTRIAN VESSEL, lying at Browne's Dock, Dublin, was boarded on Tuesday night, and six muskets with bayonets stolen, while the captain and crew were sleeping ashore, and the vessel in watchman's charge. Fenians are suspected. Uneasiness prevails in Cork.

A FINE SPECIMEN OF THE SAXON RING worn by the higher classes during the Heptarchy was discovered the other day on the farm of Mr. T. Hornby, of Cattleholmes, near Driffield. It weighs an ounce and a quarter, and contains gold equal to five sovereigns. It is supposed to be at least 1200 years old.

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND ITALY for the restoration by the former of the objects of art and documents taken away by the Austrian authorities have been resumed. The Italian Cabinet appears to have renounced its claim to the documents, and insists only on the restoration of the works of art.

THE FERNDALE EXPLOSION has left sixty-five widows and 130 or 140 orphans. Relief meetings have been held in most of the neighbouring towns, and the appeal for assistance will be extended to the country, in order to establish a permanent fund.

IN ITALY 24 per cent of the infant population die yearly; even in the healthiest districts the average duration of life is 33.43 years only, while in France it is 38.33, at Geneva 42.02, and in England 39.31. The number of births per 1000 is relatively much smaller in Italy than in England and France.

THE REV. MR. BAKER, Wesleyan missionary at Novora, and a native catechist and his students, have been murdered by a tribe of cannibals in the Fiji Islands.

CALIFORNIA, it is said, promises not only to furnish good wine, but choice silks. At a recent fair, specimens of superior watered-silk dress goods were exhibited, also sample cocoons; and the fact was demonstrated that the entire State is well adapted to silk-growing.

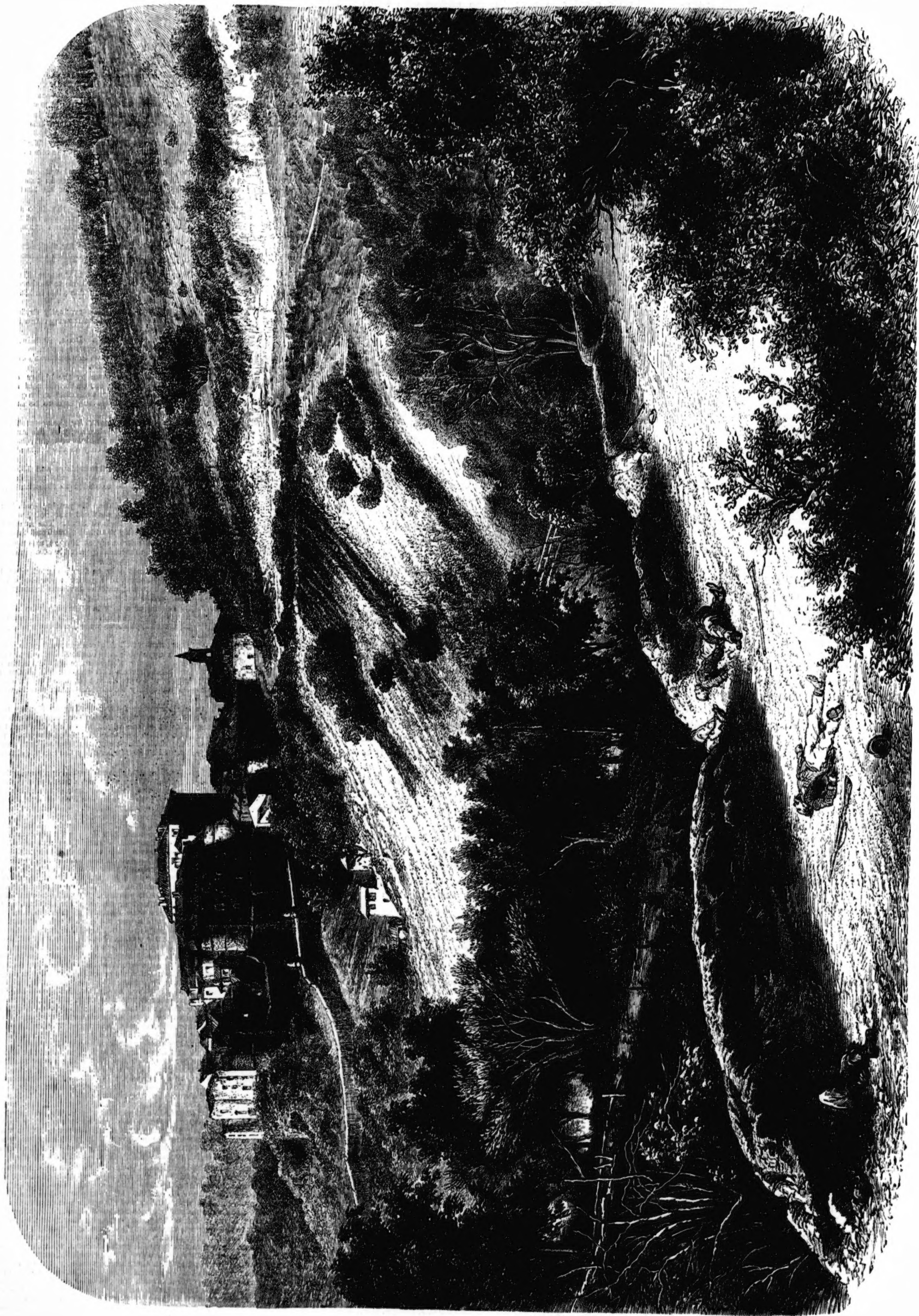
A WONDERFUL STORY is related of a lady in Wisconsin, who plunged into a millpond to save two boys from drowning. Her crinoline floated her, and, clinging to that, the boys were kept above water, and the whole party drifted safely to the shore.

THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS has given instructions to stop all liquor seizures under the prohibitory liquor laws of the State, and the chief constable has issued an order announcing that seizures will cease, in obedience to instructions from head quarters and the verdict of the late elections. The prohibitory laws will be repealed as soon as the Legislature meets. Liquor-selling goes on openly in Massachusetts, and it will no longer be interfered with.

FOUR PERSONS had a narrow escape from drowning on Sunday night. A gentleman, with two ladies, were on their way to Peckham in a cab when the driver, owing to the darkness of the night, drove up the canal bank, thinking it was the Boathouse Bridge, and the vehicle and the whole party were tumbled into the water. Their cries brought assistance, but three out of the four were nearly drowned and remain seriously ill from the shock.

HOW NOT TO DO IT.—Sir John Pakington is certainly a master in the art of Parliamentary explanation. There is almost a touch of the sublime in the solemn and, doubtless, quite unconscious audacity of two of his replies last evening. He declared that a paragraph in the *Western Morning News* was inaccurate and characterised by exaggeration. We will put together the various statements in the paragraph and the Ministerial contradictions. It was asserted that, on the removal of the 40th Regiment from Plymouth to Aldershot, the troops were kept on board her Majesty's troop-ship Simoom for three days. This is not true, says Sir John. The facts are that the troops were kept on board the Simoom from the 9th till the 12th, because the 10th being Sunday, a *dies non*, they could not be sent ashore that day, and, because, next, the tide prevented their landing in time to go to Aldershot; and so they were detained till the Tuesday. Next it was alleged that, when on board the Simoom, the troops had neither blankets nor bedding, and had to lie on the bare boards. The official contradiction is to the effect that the troops had neither blankets nor bedding, and did sleep on bare boards. But there were blankets in the ship, and it was "supposed" that the soldiers would rather not have them, for fear, if they were lost, they would have to pay for them. Again, it was stated that the soldiers were without food from five p.m. on Nov. 11, when they left the ship, until they arrived at Aldershot at half-past two the next day. There is some discrepancy here between the newspaper and the official account as to the time when the men left the vessel, perhaps because some went on shore on Monday night and the rest next morning; but Sir John is hardly justified in supposing that they were properly fed merely because after they left the ship a quantity of biscuit was found to be still in store. Again, Mr. Otway asked the Secretary for War to explain whether it was true that, after £8000 had been paid to Mr. Hale for his rockets, and these had supplanted the stick rockets, when rockets were required for Abyssinia the new pattern could not be supplied, and the old-fashioned kind had to be sent out. The simple answer to this plain question was "Yes;" but, translated into Pakingtonian, that reply spreads over some twenty sentences in the form of a contradiction. But Sir John admits that Hale got £8000 for his invention; that the War Office were lately asked whether they had any Hale's 12-pounder rockets, and had to reply in the negative; that they were asked how long it would take to make a supply, when the answer was, "Some time." "But mark you," says Sir John, "we were not asked to send any or to obtain any, but only whether we had any in store and whether we could get any." Surely any other mortal but the War Secretary would have understood that the reiterated inquiry was tantamount to a request for supply. To the assertion that Mr. Hale had said that from 800 to 1000 of his rockets could be made in a week, Sir J. Pakington replies that what Mr. Hale said was that "a small company might manufacture 500 in a week." In that case surely a large company could make 1000. Most appropriately does Lord Herbert's head droop as he stands on his pedestal in Pall-mall.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

OYSTERS.—In a paper addressed to the French Société d'Acclimatation M. Delidon makes some interesting remarks on the state of ostriculture in the commune of Marennes, Charente-Inférieure, and especially on the artificial oyster-beds of the rock of Der. M. Delidon considers the current as the natural vehicle by which the spat of the oyster is carried to those places where it finds suitable materials to fix itself upon. But, if no obstacles be put in the way of the current, an immense quantity of the spat will be taken out to the open sea and utterly lost, and it is to avoid this that collectors are formed. The ancient Romans used to make them of timber, and this material is used to this day with perfect success, with the single drawback that timber is not very durable. Stone, sea shells, and tiles, therefore, answer much better; but even these are not unattended by annoyance; for, as the oyster only travels once in its life—that is, in the state of spat—it becomes necessary, after a certain time, in order not to be at the expense of multiplying the collectors, to detach the young oyster from the stone or tile, and transfer it to the definitive oyster-bed. Now, in this preliminary operation at least 25 per cent of the young oysters are destroyed because of the thinness of their shells, which break in the attempt of separating them from the tile or stone. This serious loss is partly owing, according to M. Delidon, to the clumsy shape of the knife with which the operation is performed, but, in a great measure, also to the circumstance that the oyster is fixed to the naked tile or stone; whereas, if the latter were coated with some substance that would resist the action of the water, but could be removed without much difficulty by mechanical means, all this loss might be obviated. M. Delidon recommends for this purpose a composition he has tried successfully for the space of two years, and consisting of plaster of Paris made up into a paste with oil.



THE BATTLE-GROUND AT MENTANA AFTER THE COMBAT.

THE FIRE AT THE GOODS DEPOT OF THE NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY, CAMDEN-TOWN, AS SEEN FROM PRIMROSE-HILL.



PARIS GOSSIP.

THE Committee of the Legislative Body on the Army Bill has been won over to the views of the Government; and nine years will henceforth be the term of service under the French flag during war. This was the great point. If you remember, the preparations of the Prussian Government for its struggle with Austria commenced much in a similar way, by a tedious and sometimes hot dispute with the Berlin Chamber on this very point of the duration of the term of service. Bismarck carried his point against the Liberal party. But analogies are often rather curious than practical; and *absit omen*. I may mention that one of the amendments to be proposed in the bill is to the effect that children of foreigners born in France will be liable to serve in the ranks on attaining their majority, but that, if they claim their privilege, they will be allowed to serve in the Foreign Legion.

Contrary to the Imperial wont for many years past, the Court will not go to Compiègne this season; but in the course of a few days will come in from St. Cloud to the Tuileries direct. I do not know what the ladies of the fashionable and official world may say to this, but I suspect the change has been made at the private and urgent instance of their husbands. Three new dresses a day during the visit on invitation; and dresses the description of which, in a language specially invented for the use of ladies, mercers, and milliners, reads like a chapter from the "Thousand and One Nights," must have at length frightened the gentlemen. At any rate the modistes and silkmercers are in despair, and somehow or other, with that quick logic termed feminine, they lay the blame here on Bismarck, there on the Pope, and in many quarters on Garibaldi.

Baron Haussmann, our municipal despot, has won his cause over the recalcitrant suburban manufacturers, and the rumours of his resignation are now denied. The Emperor, however, is wiser than his instruments and agents, and he has ordered the whole question of the octroi duties to be studied anew by a special commission. Meantime, we hear of an intention to reduce the duties on wine by one half. But these are only palliatives. Nothing is felt can compensate for the absence of a representative municipal government. In this matter the Administration have just received a severe rap over the knuckles in the city of Lyons, in the council of which all the elected members, being overborne by the nominated ones, resigned and then offered themselves for re-election. Every man of them was returned by immense majorities. Will the Government take the hint, which is surely broad enough?

Give credit, however, where it is deserved. The Home Minister has appointed a commission on railways to devise a plan for lowering goods charges; for securing mixed trains of all classes for long distances at moderate fares and almost express speed; and for compelling the companies to consume their own smoke. And be sure that in a matter of this sort the centralised power of the Government will be obeyed. The railway "interest" can't turn a vote in the Chambers here.

A poor little paper called the *Lune* took it into its noddle lately to write politics without being authorised. Its proprietor and editor, a M. Polo, has been brought to his senses by a fine of 2000fr., and the order of the Court purported that the *Lune* was to cease to appear! Some classical wit says to the victim—*Nunc Polo* [read *paula*] *minora canamus*.

It still rains *communiqué*, and I see the press office in the Ministry of the Interior has been reinforced.

A version of "Hamlet" by Dumas has been brought out here at the Gaité, with a lady in the character of the Danish Prince. The last scene of general slaughter in the tragedy is retained, contrary to French taste. Dumas, being remonstrated with, says:—"If I allow Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' to be mutilated, that may be a reason for the mutilation of my 'Anthony' 300 years hence." Is not this sublime? Dumas is *impayable*.

SYMPATHY WITH THE POPE.—On Wednesday night a crowded and enthusiastic meeting of the Catholics of London was held at St. James's Hall to express their sympathy with the Pope. Archbishop Manning presided, and several Roman Catholic noblemen and members of Parliament were present. Speeches were delivered by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark, Lord Arundell of Wardour, Lord Denbigh, &c.; and resolutions expressing strong sympathy with his Holiness and tendering the thanks of the meeting to the 14th army were adopted.

THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.—Further correspondence on the vexed question of the United States claims, arising out of the depredations of the Alabama, was communicated to the House of Commons on Tuesday. It consists of two despatches from Lord Stanley, dated respectively Sept. 10 and Nov. 16, the latter document being the more important. It is a reply to the despatch in which Mr. Seward stated not only that the so-called Alabama claims should be made matter of reference before an arbiter, but that his Government would deem itself at liberty to insist that the actual proceedings and relations of the British Government "towards the United States, as they occurred during the rebellion, should also be inquired into." Lord Stanley observes that, as such a reference might include the point whether the conduct of Great Britain, in recognising the Confederate States as belligerents, was justifiable or not, he deems it advisable to leave no ground for misapprehension as to the views of the English Cabinet. He therefore "thinks it necessary distinctly to say" that they cannot depart from their refusal to permit a foreign Power to determine whether their policy in recognising the state of war was or was not suitable to the circumstances of the time. In perfect consistency, he adds, the only point which he would refer to the decision of an arbiter is the question respecting the moral responsibility of the Government, on the assumption that an actual state of war existed between the United States and the Confederate States. The noble Lord then points out clearly the distinction between the two classes of claims which may arise, as involving two separate tribunals—an arbiter to pronounce on the question of moral responsibility, and a mixed commission to examine general claims on each side. He expresses the earnest hope that the Government of the United States will accept without hesitation his original proposal, as thus restated. The despatch is distinguished by all that clearness and logical force, combined with perfect courtesy and temper, in which Lord Stanley excels. Such is the last word on the part of England in this harassing and perplexing controversy. We await the reply from Washington with some hope, but, whether it is favourable or otherwise, Mr. Seward will have some difficulty in disturbing the position taken up by his able opponent.

ANOTHER LITTLE WAR IN AFRICA.—Early in October Bishop Crowther, of Sierra Leone (who is a negro), went on a visitation up the River Niger, and, after landing at several points, he ultimately came to a place called Ida, where he proposed making a brief sojourn. On his presence becoming known to the natives of the village several palavers took place, and at last it was resolved that the Bishop should be detained and a ransom demanded before he was released. The chief requested that the British Consul at the confluence of the Niger should be communicated with, and the value of 1000 slaves delivered to the "governor" of Ida before the representative of the see of Sierra Leone could be set at liberty. The Consul at the confluence of the Niger being absent at that time, the Vice-Consul, Mr. Fell, consulted with the Europeans resident at the place, and it was agreed that the exploring steamer Thomas Bazley, which was then at the confluence, should be manned and equipped, and that Mr. Fell and several traders should go down the Niger to Ida and demand the release of Bishop Crowther. All the arrangements having been completed, the Thomas Bazley started on the expedition, and reached the native village all well. On making a demand for the Bishop, Mr. Fell and his companions were met with a flat refusal on the part of the principal chief. A squabble then took place, the natives appearing determined to retain their prisoner by the force of arms. The Europeans, however, were armed with revolvers, and the Ida men having commenced the fight by firing arrows into Mr. Fell's party, a regular melee took place, in the course of which Bishop Crowther took to his heels and escaped to the shore, where he was taken on board the Thomas Bazley. Meantime the fight was carried on with determination on both sides, Mr. Rolleston, one of Mr. Fell's companions, having shot down five of the natives during the fight. The blacks, having received reinforcements, were about to make a grand assault upon the small body of traders when the latter retreated towards the beach and had got on board one of the boats when the natives rushed down and delivered a perfect shower of arrows into the pinnace. One of the arrows struck the Vice-Consul in the left side, pierced the heart, and the unfortunate gentleman died almost instantaneously. Mr. Rolleston was also injured by an arrow, and one report from the confluence states that he had died from blood-poisoning, the end of the shaft having been tipped with a poisonous solution. The statement proves to be erroneous, as Mr. Rolleston is quite well. The captain of the Thomas Bazley, seeing the turn that affairs had taken, went in shore a little, and sent one or two shots among the crowd of bellicose blacks on the beach. The result was effective, and the natives retreated to the village. The Bishop was ten days in captivity at Ida, was kept on the meanest diet, which he was obliged to eat in the presence of the chief of Ida or some of his followers, and was deprived of his Bible until within a day of the arrival of the Thomas Bazley. The steamer eventually reached the confluence of the Niger, and the last accounts left the Bishop of Sierra Leone quite well at the British consulate.

Literature.

North Coast and other Poems. By ROBERT BUCHANAN. With Illustrations by eminent Artists, engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. London and New York: Routledge and Sons.

Anything like an adequate review—not to say a criticism—of this volume would occupy so much of the space which near Christmas time is heavily bespoken, that we shall best serve the interests of author and publisher, as well as most certainly please our own readers, by devoting every inch we can spare, after a word or two of comment, to extracts from the best parts of the book. The artists we regret to be compelled to dismiss in very short spaces indeed. Where there is so much to praise, it is almost harsh to select a single point for notice; but nobody will miss the extraordinary force with which the countenance of the idiot is rendered on page 51; the beauty of the sea-lights on pages 7 and 186; or the natural charm of the scenes on pages 189 and 213. The last is particularly beautiful. The Scotch elder on page 151 is also capital. We praise these "points" in the artists' share of the general effect, not because there is not more to praise, but because it is well to be specific here and there, even where one's space is limited. By-the-by, too, the monk and the lady on page 175 are splendidly done.

Of course, the poetry is of unequal rank; but, in order to estimate the true bearing of that remark, we invite the critical reader to compare (say) Mr. Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" with "Meg Blane," the opening poem in the present volume. Mr. Tennyson can well afford to submit to the comparison, whatever the result. And the result is this—"Enoch Arden" there is, of course, much more of the perfect craftsman; but, in depth of conception, pathetic interpretation of nature, fullness of thought, and that subtle reading between the lines which seems so involuntary as to suggest the kind of genius which is next of kin to madness, the higher place—and by many stairs of the temple, too—belongs to "Meg Blane." A similar result follows, in our opinion, upon a comparison of Mr. Tennyson's "Brook" with the poem of that title in the volume before us. Of the "Celtic Mystics" it is difficult to speak truly and yet keep within bounds, so perfect is the "assimilation," and so wonderful the "erie" beauty and exaltation of the poetry. We can only quote the last of the series. Some readers will understand it at a glance; others, after a little study; the majority, perhaps, never; but every lover of poetry will be able to taste it, and catch the bouquet of a strange wine—if the image may be pardoned—though the name and origin may be obscure to him:—

CELTIC MYSTICS. NO. IX.

In the time of my tribulation
Melt me, Master, like snow;
Melt me, dissolve me, exhale me,
Into Thy wool-white cloud;
With a warm wind blow me upward
Over the hills and the seas,
And upon a summer morning
Poise me over the valley
Of Thy mellow yellow realm;
Then, for a wondrous moment,
Watch me from infinite space
With Thy round red eyeball of sunlight,
And melt and dissolve me downward
In the beautiful silver rain
That drippeth musically,
With a gleam like starlight and moonlight,
On the footstool of Thy throne.

A short extract from "The Ballad-maker." This is

THE BOY-THIEF'S DREAM.

He thought he was in heaven, and it seemed
Pleasant and bright and green, like Primrose-hill;
And there was no one there, but all was still;
And he was clean and naked, and the light
Shone on his body, and made it golden bright;
And though a little hungry, through his breast
He felt a tired and pleasant peace and rest.
Then, feeling no one near, and tired, he crept
Into a corner full of flowers, and slept.
But all at once, while lying on the sod,
He heard a deep, gruff voice, and knew 'twas God,
And felt rough fingers seize him by the ears,
While he was thick with sleep, and full of fears;
And heard God say, "What boy lies here apart?"
And some one said it was the thief, Jem Hart;
And though he sobbed and cried, they would not hark,
But took him to a gateway, cold and dark,
And thrust him out—and full of pain he woke.

And, lastly, at full length,

THE BROOK.

Oh, sweet and still around the hill
Thy silver waters, Brook, are creeping;
Beneath the hill as sweet and still
Thy weary friend lies sleeping:
A laurel leaf is in his hair,
His eyes are closed to human seeming,
And surely he has dreams most fair,
If he indeed be dreaming.

O Brook, he smiled, a happy child,
Upon thy banks, and loved thy crying,
And as time flew, thy murmur grew
A trouble purifying:
Till, last, thy laurel leaf he took,
Dream-eyed and tearful, like a woman,
And turned thy haunting cry, O Brook,
To speech divine and human.

O Brook! in song full sweet and strong
He sang of thee he loved so dearly;
Then softly creep around his sleep,
And murmur to him cheerily:
For though he knows not fret nor fear,
Though life no more slips strangely through him,
Yet he may sleep more sound to hear
His friend so close unto him.

And when at last the sleepers east
Their swathes aside, and, wondering, waken,
Let thy friend be full tenderlie
In silver arms upaken:
Him be it then thy task to bear
Up to the footstool, softly flowing—
Smiles on his eyes, and in his hair
Thy leaf of laurel blowing!

Our readers know that we consider it of small use to point out faults in work of a certain rank; for the simple reason that the author is sure to know them as well as the keenest critic, to find them out, and to correct them. For the terms in which we have spoken of Mr. Buchanan's volume no apology is necessary. If in the hierarchy of the agents of human progress the poet ranks highest—for the obvious reason that he has the vision of all that makes life worth while, and the power to put what he sees into "marching music"—no welcome can be too warm for real song; certainly not in a case like that of Mr. Buchanan, where the ordinary functions of a *littérateur* must hang like panniers on the flanks of the horse of the skies. Our readers will not, we trust, attribute to us any "sentimental" or "maudlin" views upon this question. But if we reflect upon the long periods of absorption, with nothing to show for them, and the dangerous excitements of sudden accessions of the poetic passion, we shall hardly escape being driven to treat poetry which meets us in this way in a very different spirit from that of those who think they have made a great point by saying (as was recently said so often apropos of this very subject) that Shakespeare muddled and puddled in playhouses and Johnson slaved like a nigger. The answer is obvious—So much the worse for Shakespeare and Shakespeare's work and Johnson and Johnson's work.

Life's Masquerade. A Novel. In 3 vols. London: Charles W. Wood. Upon the whole, we are inclined to accept "Life's Masquerade" with quite as much good feeling as can usually be bestowed on the less important circulating library literature. It is anonymous, and the titlepage is silent as to its being written by "the author of"

anything, and yet there are no traces of its being a first attempt. This is praiseworthy in itself; although, indeed, when a first attempt attracts much attention it is generally on account of promise rather than of performance, and there is certainly nothing particularly promising in these pages. The author runs away with a cheerful fluency, and seldom takes the reader by the button-hole to make him admire a solemn aphorism, to puzzle over a paradox, or to wonder at the repetition of something perfectly undoubted. While it is to fiction-devourers all commonplace, it is but fair to add that it is all interesting, and that even fastidious readers might run through it "in a canter." It is a tale of revenge, of wrongs being righted, and the incidents have much of "Night and Morning" and "Monte Cristo" about them. The hero, Hamilton, has secretly married the charming Eveleen De Courcy, and a disappointed lover, named Murray, with the assistance of another scoundrel named Sloman, contrives to get Hamilton transported for ten years for a concocted crime of which he is entirely innocent. Old De Courcy turns his daughter out of doors, and soon after shoots himself. Eveleen gives birth to a remarkably fine and handsome boy, the "very image of his father," and dies. The fine boy grows up, and is turned on the world as apprentice to a vulgar linen-draper with a coarse and brutal wife and family. Here the copy of "Night and Morning" is as plain as daylight. The youngster runs away, falls amongst good and bad people; and in Paris, at the age of twenty, he becomes a ruined gambler, and even goes the length of endeavouring to break into the strong box of the father of the very nice girl to whom he is engaged. The father dies of fright; and, in escaping from the scene, young Hamilton finds his father at the very moment when that unhappy victim has accomplished his worst revenge on the two wretches who got him convicted. They have simply killed each other. In the mean time the elder Hamilton has made a large fortune in Australia; and, becoming possessed of secrets which might lead to the hanging of Murray and Sloman, he has sought those gentlemen incognito, and played them nicely one against the other. The father and son seem to recognise each other by instinct, and the young girl, Rosalie, although she knows all about young Hamilton's iniquities and their fearful result, yet marries him on the spot, and papa gives them plenty of money. What a story to be sure! It need only be added that the great majority of the characters are as little like men and women as possible, and that the first heroine, Eveleen, when in distress, howls away in a more comic and fantastic style of stilt than anything we remember since the Minerva Press, Clara Reeve, and Ann Radcliffe. The story of the voyage, the iceberg, &c., is, however, very well told, and is apparently from personal experience; and altogether, as we have said, the panorama moves along with spirit. No doubt the book will be read with interest by many. By-the-way, talking of experience, the author of "Life's Masquerade" makes his hero, Hamilton, when on trial, engage an "able counsel," but yet he conducts his own defence and makes a speech of rapturous eloquence. It may be doubted if that ever came within the author's experience.

Golden Thoughts from Golden Fountains. Arranged in Fifty-two Divisions. Illustrations by Eminent Artists, engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. London: F. Warne and Co.

The illustrations and get-up of such a book as this are the points which naturally attract most attention, and in these respects "Golden Thoughts" must be pronounced a decided success. To our thinking, the Messrs. Dalziel, who have officiated as printers as well as engravers for this work, have not hitherto been very happy in their typographical efforts. Their work in that department was often coarse, ill-executed, and indicated either lack of care or lack of skill—features all the more remarkable considering their deservedly high reputation as engravers. In this book, however, there is evidence that they have almost, if not altogether, overcome the defects to which we have alluded, for "Golden Thoughts" is beautifully printed. To correspond with the title, the ink used is of a golden hue, which adds greatly to the refinement of tone that pervades the whole. It has one disadvantage, however, and that is, that it is painful to the eye to look steadily on the page by artificial light, because, when one does so a certain dazzled glare comes over the vision. But by daylight this effect is not experienced, and the beauty and chasteness of the volume show fully out. And a very beautiful and chaste volume it is, as well as regards its literary contents, its artistic effects, and its general get-up. As its title implies, the work is a collection of extracts, in prose and verse, from the writings of eminent authors; the pieces have all a religious or moral tone, and are designed to constitute a reading for each Sunday in the year. We doubt if the notion of appropriating a certain bit of reading for special days or seasons is much adhered to, except in the heads of editors and in the Church services; but "Golden Thoughts from Golden Fountains" may be profitably and pleasingly looked at and read every day in the year.

Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero. By WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. In Two Volumes. London: Smith, Elder, and Co.

In these columns, shortly after the lamented death of Mr. Thackeray, it was suggested that an edition of all his works should be issued, to include everything he was known to have produced, either with pen or pencil. This idea seems to have been acted upon, and the result is the publication of the "Standard Edition" of the author's works, of which "Vanity Fair," in two magnificent volumes, is the first instalment. Here we have all Mr. Thackeray's own illustrations—those queer, quaint fancies, full of faults of drawing, wooden-headedness in the figures (a notable example of which is the group on page 13, representing Becky Sharp, the girl, in her father's studio, among his loose-mannered friends), but every feature instinct with humour and genius, although showing, plainly enough, that the satirist mistook his vocation when he aimed at being an artist and illustrator of the writings of others. But, as we have said, everything produced by Thackeray is worth possessing; so we welcome with pleasure this edition of his works, which we feel sure will be largely purchased and thoroughly appreciated. In get-up the work is worthy of its contents, being beautifully printed on fine paper, and handsomely bound, and is altogether a worthy monument to the genius of the author. The price is only 7s. 6d. per volume, or 15s. for the whole of (perhaps) Thackeray's best work. At this price, who that takes pride in possessing worthily-filled book-shelves will be without the "Standard Thackeray"?

The Mill on the Floss. By GEORGE ELIOT. Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons.

This constitutes the second volume of the edition of the works of George Eliot (that is, Miss Evans), which Messrs. Blackwood are engaged in publishing under the author's auspices, and in point of paper, print, and binding it is all that could be desired. Utility is not sacrificed to mere meretricious prettiness, while elegance as well as substantiality characterises every part, the illustrations not even excepted, and these constitute, perhaps, the least effective feature of the work. We had occasion, on the appearance of the first volume, to take exception to the manner in which Adam Bede was portrayed in several engravings. The illustrations to this volume do not err in the same way as then pointed out by us, for all are in good taste. Indeed, the volume is in every respect a welcome instalment of the works of one of the most popular and mind-searching of English novelists.

The Select Library of Fiction. London: Chapman and Hall.

It is now some months since we noticed this excellent series of favourite works of fiction, and during that period the "Select Library" has received several welcome additions. Among the recent issues are—and we can only afford space to mention the titles—"Market Harborough" and "Inside the Bar," by Whyte Melville; "Slaves of the Ring," and "One and Twenty," by F. W. Robinson; "John Douglas's Vow," or, Thyra Gascoigne, by Mrs. Edmund Jennings, &c. All these works have already passed through several editions, and are favourites with the novel-reading public, most of whom, however, will be glad to renew acquaintance with old friends in this cheap and convenient form.

THE GREAT FIRE IN CAMDEN TOWN.

As our readers are aware, a fire broke out at the goods station in connection with the London and North-Western Railway, at Camden Town, on the afternoon of the 26th ult. Almost adjoining this depot of Messrs. Pickford and Co. and Messrs. Chaplin and Horne are the warehouses and factory of Messrs. Collard and Collard, whose vast pile of workshops is on the opposite side of the road to the offices and store-rooms of the firm, as also to the premises of Pickford and Co. The locality has been the scenes of great disasters by fire. In 1851 the pianoforte manufactory was destroyed, the loss being £60,000; and the destruction of the goods depot of Messrs. Pickford and Co. in 1857 will long be remembered as the most destructive fire that London has seen for a quarter of a century, with the sole exception of that immense calamity at Cotton's Wharf, by which, in 1861, two millions' worth of property was destroyed and the Superintendent of the London Fire Brigade, the lamented Mr. James Braidwood, lost his life.

When the great goods station at Camden Town took fire on the evening referred to, the neighbourhood for some distance round was placed in a state of the greatest confusion by the hurried removal of heavy and inflammable merchandise, lines of waggons stretching along the road for nearly half a mile. The first intimation of fire took place about ten minutes after five, at which time, although many of the clerks in the invoice department had left, large numbers still remained. At this time an odour was noticed as of burning paper proceeding from the direction of what is termed the book-room, a place in which all the old books, counterfoils of invoices, and general paper lumber of every description are deposited. The book-room is situated at the north-western corner of the building, which is an enormous square. It is situated at the top of James-street, and at the extreme end of the Oval-road, which is terminated by the gates leading into the Camden goods station of the London and North-Western Railway. In this, the eastern side, are two enormous openings or entrance-gates, into which the luggage-vans drive to deposit and to be loaded with goods which have been conveyed to and from the railway. This building is a perfect square, and extends westward to the verge of the railway, where it crosses over the Regent's Canal to the incline running from this point down to the Euston terminus. There are also lines of railway running parallel with the passenger-train bridge over the canal, at the north-western corner, direct into the building, to convey the goods trucks in and out to the landing-stages. The extreme southern boundary of the building is flanked by that which is known as the "long" factory of Messrs. Collard and Co., the pianoforte manufacturers, and where all their principal steam-apparatus is fixed and is constantly at work. The northern boundary is the Regent's Canal, which divides it from the Camden goods station, and the long lines of warehouses and tramways on which the goods waggons rest after journeys, or for the purposes of loading and unloading, &c. On this northern side, running eastward from the book-room referred to, and which extends along the whole western side of the upper story of the building, runs a series of offices, in which some hundreds of clerks are employed. The western side belongs to the employes of Messrs. Chaplin and Horne, and the eastern to those of Messrs. Pickford and Co. At the time mentioned the sense of suffocation amongst the clerks in the offices near the book-room was so great that some of them had much difficulty in escaping before being overcome. Just outside the gates of the building, and at the point where both the passenger and goods trains cross the Regent's Canal, is situated the fire-bell, which, being rung violently, at once called the attention of the employes, who, including those belonging to the company in the goods and various other departments, muster between 600 and 700 persons. Nearly the whole of these constitute a fire-brigade; and, there being several powerful engines at hand, every one knew his post, and, under the command of Mr. Greenish, the chief of the goods department, got to work. So combustible, however, did the materials ignited prove, and so rapid was the progress of the flames, that the whole north-western corner and side of the building was on fire in a few minutes, and, being covered only by a glass roof, the flames shot high into the air. The employes, however, speedily got to work with their engines, and were promptly aided by the Ferdinand-street engine of the Camden and Kentish Town Volunteer Fire Brigade, which was the first outside engine to arrive on the spot. This was speedily followed by the powerful engines belonging to the Albany-street Cavalry Barracks, in charge of a strong detachment of the Royal Horse Guards (Blue), under command of Lieutenant Wombwell, Riding-Master Boswell, and Corporal-Major Priestly, and they set to work with a good will and devotion which drew down the admiration of all who witnessed their excellent organisation and earnestness. The flames, however, continued to increase, and attracted thousands of spectators from every direction. The Metropolitan Brigade steam land-engines arrived in rapid succession, and were speedily at work under command of Captain Shaw, who directed the efforts of his men; whilst Colonel Harris, assistant Police Commissioner, who soon after the outbreak arrived, gave instructions to the superintendents as to the disposal of the force, to prevent confusion and danger. For a long while after the whole of the engineering force had got to work, little or no impression appeared to be made upon the mass of fire; and as soon as it became subdued at one point it broke out again at another, arising, it was believed, from combustible goods, such as oil, &c., having become at intervals ignited. At one time, probably arising from this cause, on looking through the principal gates before described, the vast interior looked like a complete furnace, and the flames ran up the iron pillars and out through the glass roof in a manner which would almost have led to the belief that these supports were of wood instead of such material.

During the progress of the fire the scene was a most exciting one. Within the gates of the railway the sparks and cracking noises from the steam fire-engines as they stood on the banks of the canal, the shunting of the goods and railway engines as they were rushing about on the various sidings, the arrival and departure of trains, with the lurid flare of the fire resting on the faces of the excited passengers looking from the carriage-windows, the constant "thud, thud," of the hand-engines, the shouts of the populace, and the general uproar, gave the whole affair a remarkable effect. It was not until nearly eight o'clock, notwithstanding the immense amount of water-power brought to bear on the burning mass, that the fire was got sufficiently under to allay any apprehension of its extending. But the engines kept on playing during the remainder of the evening. The damage done, we are glad to say, was not so extensive as at first apprehended, and did not interfere with the ordinary course of business.

NEW STREET PAVEMENT.—An important resolution was adopted by the Commission of Sewers at their sitting on Tuesday, being a report of the Streets Committee, on the motion of Mr. Pedler, to substitute asphalt or gas pitch as a cement for the usual granite paving of the roadway, as an experiment, in place of the ordinary grouting. By this plan, which will prevent the soft bed from passing up between the stones, the formation of mud will be rendered impossible. Manchester has been adopting this plan with great success for the last twelve years, and it is hoped that the Manchester Town Council will lend their aid in giving the citizens a sample of what they are now enjoying in clean and comfortable streets by laying down a specimen in London at the expense of the Commission of Sewers.

DEATH FROM STARVATION.—"Death of a bookseller from starvation," is the heading of a report which appears in the daily papers. A poor man who once occupied a respectable position as a bookseller fell into poverty, and became what his wife called a collector—which, being interpreted, means that he collected the cast-off ends of cigars in the streets. Man and wife had five shillings a week to live upon, and of this pittance two shillings had to go for rent. They might have entered the workhouse, but persons who have been what is called "respectable" entertain an invincible repugnance to that refuge of the miserable and the unfortunate. In the end the poor decayed tradesman "died," as the coroner's jury say, "from vital exhaustion, consequent on the want of proper and sufficient food and clothing." If ever there was a case in which outdoor relief might properly have been afforded this was one; but outdoor relief was refused to this starving couple. The excuse made for the relieving officer, that he has too much to do, is no doubt a good one; but it is the imperative duty of the parish to afford him the assistance necessary to enable him to inquire into the circumstances of applicants for outdoor relief, and to discriminate between the worthy and the unworthy.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

LAST week the Peninsular and Oriental Company's affairs were before the House of Commons; and it appears that they are, or rather were, in a bad way. No dividend has been paid for two half years. The trade in the East has been exceptionally bad. The Government are now taking troops in their own vessels; and, moreover, the company having lost several ships, the insurance fund, which used to pay part of the dividend, could not pay anything. This was bad enough; but the mail contract had expired, or was about to expire, and it was rumoured that the Government would throw it open to tender, and allow the French Messageries Impériales to compete. Here was a pretty kettle of fish, for, if the French company had been allowed to offer for the contract it would have certainly got it, as it is highly subsidised by the Emperor, and he would have done anything to get rid of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's competition. However, the English Government never could have seriously thought of doing such a suicidal thing. The mail contract was, though, thrown open to tender. But neither was this mischievous to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, for, as was well known beforehand, there is no other company that can take the mails. And so the Peninsular and Oriental Company have got the contract, and got it upon much better terms than they had before. The present subsidy is £230,000 a year—the new subsidy is to be £400,000; but that is not all, nor the best, of the bargain. The Government is to guarantee the shareholders 6 per cent on the capital. For this, though, there is to be a large increase of service. On the whole, however, one can see that there are brighter days ahead for this famous company. There was a good deal of acute criticism of this contract when it came before the House. Foremost, Mr. Ayrton made a very able and exhaustive speech, and mooted points well worthy of consideration. He objected to the time—twelve years. "Before this long period expires," he said, "fresh routes by railway in India and in Europe will be opened." He objected to the slow speed—9½ miles an hour; but it was answered that it is 9½ miles in all weathers, and that a faster speed can be had by paying for it. Faster speed means larger ships—ships of 2500 tons—and larger ships would cost a deal of money. Mr. Norwood, a shipowner, hinted at extravagance of management, and I dare say the management is extravagant; all joint-stock companies are extravagant. Here, I think, is an item of management which might be decreased: passengers going by the company's ships may have unlimited wines and spirits. Surely this is extravagant mischievous to both the company and the passengers! You and I, Mr. Editor, have known gentlemen who could cosume in drink, during a voyage to China, the amount of their passage money.

My dear readers of the ILLUSTRATED TIMES, have you any notion of the amount of money we are spending every year? I doubt it. But many of you who have hitherto had no votes will be called to exercise the suffrage in the year 1869, and on this subject you really ought to post yourselves up; and I know of no speech in Parliament of late that will give you so much information as that made in the House last week by Mr. White, of Brighton. By that we learn how the expenditure has increased, and is still increasing. There seems to be nothing in the world so expensive as our national expenditure. Look at this:—In 1850, only seventeen years ago, we spent £51,000,000. In 1867 we spent, or are to spend, £68,184,000—that is, upwards of £14,000,000 more than we did in 1850, besides the £2,000,000 just voted for this wretched Abyssinian war. And please to mark, this year there was voted £2,000,000 more than last year. And you will remember that Sir John Pakington, then First Lord, wanted a great deal more. Just ponder this, all you voters in *presente* and *in futuro*. I wish a copy of Mr. White's most useful speech could be placed in the hands of every one of you. One thing is most heartily to be desired from the late extension of the suffrage—viz., that we may get into the House a strong body of intelligent, persevering critics of the Estimates. We have a few professed critics; but they do little good. They potter about trifles, and leave the great items of expenditure untouched. Moreover, they want knowledge. Only last Session one of these potters for half an hour was pecking away, like a woodpecker tapping at the bole of a tree, at an old retired civil servant's pension, ignorant all the while that this retiring pension was settled by Act of Parliament, and was as rightfully his own for life as the hon. potterer's lease of his house. Now, if this gentleman is anxious to be useful, and has the requisite brains—rather doubtful, that—let him study our diplomatic and consular lists; for it is diplomacy—"turbulent diplomacy," as Disraeli calls it, witness this Abyssinian business—that makes wars, and wars render necessary our "bloated armaments" (another of Disraeli's expressions), and it is these that cost the money.

I beg to remind your readers that a committee, of which Sir David Brewster is the chairman, desire to solicit benevolent co-operation under the following circumstances. The late Professor M'Gaughey, who was editor of the *Scientific Review*, died suddenly a few weeks since, leaving a wife and four children of tender age utterly unprovided for. He was a man of high philosophical attainments, whose life was passed in scientific and literary pursuits. He had no opportunity of realising more than a bare sufficiency for his daily wants, and his widow and family are by his death deprived of their only means of support. The committee is associated for the purpose of raising a fund to make some provision for Mrs. M'Gaughey and her children, and they earnestly request contributions towards so worthy an object of benevolence.

Punch's Pocketbook for 1868 has just appeared, and is, as usual, excellent. Besides a lot of useful information, an almanac, diary, &c., there are some very funny engravings and witty and amusing poems and sketches. The frontispiece, especially, is good. It represents "The Person in Parliament—Chairing the New Member," the new member being Mr. Punch himself, and his constituents Mr. Mill's "persons," who march under banners inscribed "The Free and Independent Burgesses of Cackleborough," "Connubial Rating," "Bachelor Disqualification," &c. Then the vignette on the title-page shows us a female Lord Chancellor in wig, robes, &c.; while the House of Peers is personified by a "certain convocation of politic" owls; and the ambassadors, courts of law, and so forth, are funnily caricatured. In fact, *Punch's Pocketbook* is quite a pocketful of amusement. I shall keep my copy constantly about me, and have recourse to it whenever I feel that my own affairs, or those of the world, are "out of joint."

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

THE MAGAZINES.

It will not be denied that "Good Cheer," the Christmas number of *Good Words*, has at least the merit of originality in the character of its literature. The list of contributors is already well known, and there is, perhaps, not one of them who is not something more than a literary man or literary woman; not one, perhaps, who has not a natural vein with something spontaneously peculiar about it. Hence a freshness and reality which appeal much more vividly to the mind and heart than any quantity of Christmas "literature," however able. Whatever Christmas annual he buys, let the reader buy "Good Cheer" as a supplement, and he will not regret it. There are seventy double-columned pages for the usual price of *Good Words*. Mr. Pinwell's wood-cut to "Billy Buttons" is capital, and Mr. W. Small's conception of "Old Sixtyfoot"—evidently thrown off in haste—is an inspiration.

A character of its own belongs also to the Christmas number of *Once A Week*, entitled the "Guest-Meal." Mr. Shirley Brooks and Mr. Burnand, among others, are very entertaining. If Mr. Burnand takes care of himself (he will pardon my freedom of speech) he will one day prove our better, nobler Sterne. I characterise him thus crudely (knowing it is *mauvais ton* in criticism), because there is no space for more. But let him take care! I think the prize in woodcuts this month must be given to Mr. John Gilbert's frontispiece to the "Guest-Meal."

Of the *St. Pauls* here is by far the best number yet out. With the "Essay on Carlylism" (from an unmistakable pen) I agree—except that, knowing as much about sermons, preachers, and "all

that," as any human being can easily know, I have to observe that I never heard, from any pulpit, anything like the author's description of what preachers "tell us from Sunday to Sunday;" and I know, from the nature of the case, it is impossible that any preacher should talk such nonsense; the description is founded on a misapprehension. The paper on "The Trade of Journalism" is by far the best I ever read upon that subject. It is quite refreshing to have a frank admission that the "dignity monstrosity" (being pointed at by the finger) "is as hateful to some men as it is pleasing to the bulk of mankind." The author waives as irrelevant the question "how far an honest journalist may sacrifice his individual views and opinions to those of his journal;" but it is, at all events, a very simple one. He may, and often must, being a subordinate, refrain from writing what he does think; but under no circumstances may he write what he does not think. If he does, he is a huckstering liar, and there's an end. The author goes on to say that, as far as his observation goes, "there is no reason why a high-minded man should object to the pursuit of journalism, under the impression that by pursuing it he must sacrifice his self-respect or independence." This proposition is put in such "safe" terms that no one can flatly deny it. But did this able writer never know of such a thing as an editor intimating to his contributor the kind of opinion he was expected to express on a public question, and in such terms as meant, "Do this, or we quarrel"? Is this even an uncommon thing? I assert that it is not. Again, does this author know or suspect the pretty frequent occurrence of anything like the following:—An editor has a personal—or say even a literary—animosity (which may be just as mean) with regard to a particular writer, and, in sending out that writer's book for notice, he gives the reviewer a politely-guarded hint that he wishes the book "slated"? The letter, if produced in a court of law or in good society, would be found a most blameless letter; but the contributor can read between the lines. What is the result? If he is poor and base too, he "slates" the book and pockets his money. If he is poor and not base, he tries, in writing the review, to arrive at a compromise between his own opinion and that of his employer, the fruit of the effort being a review which does the author of the book an injustice of the subtlest kind. It is useless denying these things: they are quite common.

Some few years ago, in your columns, Mr. Editor, I maintained, in a hurried way, the possibility, and suggested the practicability, of teaching deaf-mutes to talk, and was pretty extensively called a fool for my pains. Well, in the *Cornhill* for December there is a most interesting paper, entitled "Dumb Men's Speech," which is a tolerably conclusive answer to the doubters. The thing has been triumphantly and extensively done. "Jack the Giant killer" is unquestionably good; so are the "Chapters on Talk." I wish somebody would take up the Plagiarising Talkers, the majority of whose good things are other people's—hissing hot, too, very often!

THE THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

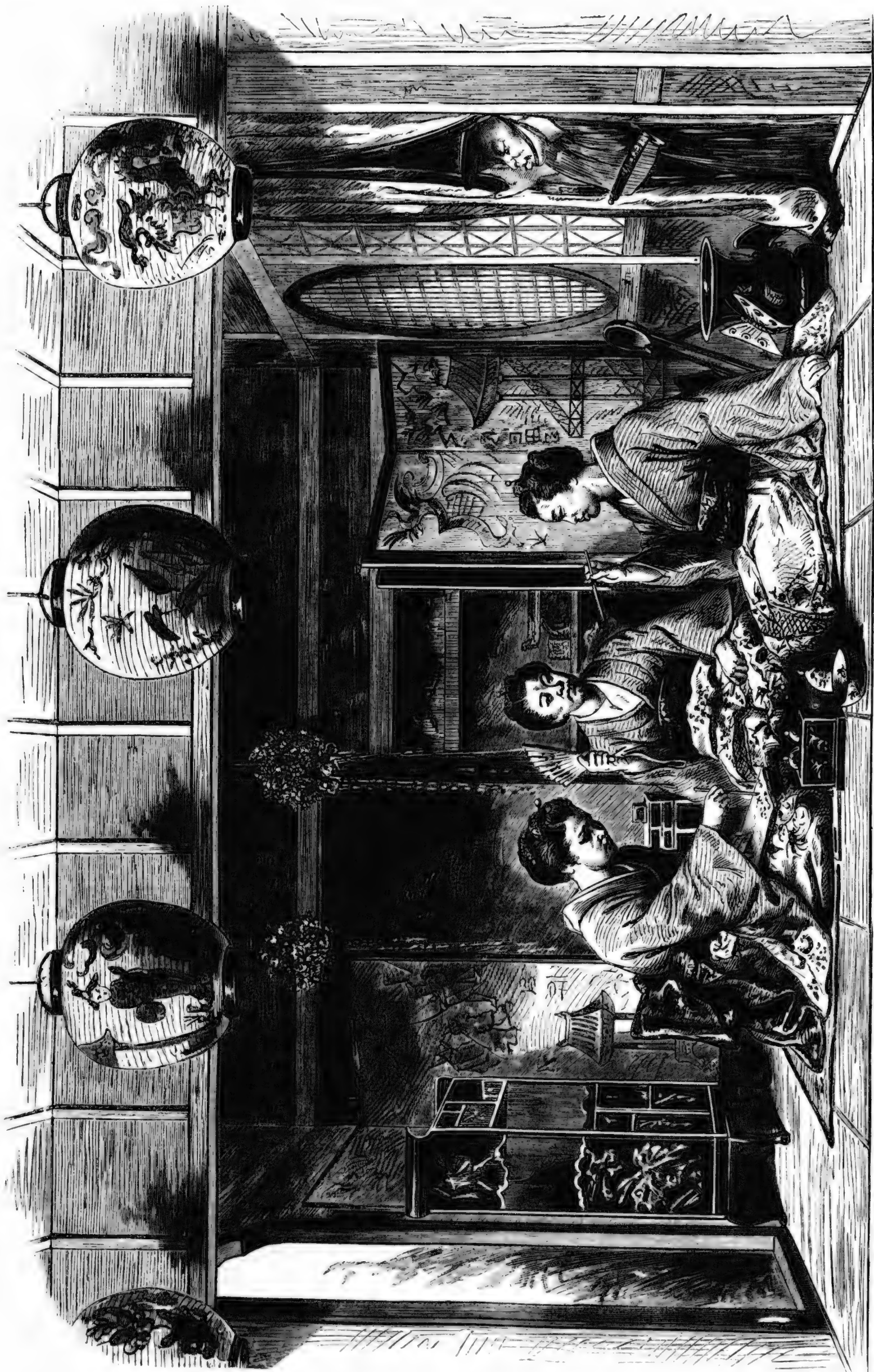
The lull that ordinarily prevails in affairs theatrical during the few weeks that immediately precede the annual burst of Christmas extravaganza has been broken by Mr. Benjamin Webster, who has produced a three-act comedy, "From Grave to Gay," at the OLYMPIC THEATRE. This work is a translation of M. Scibie's "Le Feu Lionel," which was played, I believe, at the Théâtre Français in 1858; and Mr. Benjamin Webster, jun., is responsible for the work in its English form. The plot turns upon a mystification which results from the rather unaccountable behaviour of a certain Mr. Edward Armitage, who, contemplating suicide in consequence of the ridicule which he supposes must attach to an abortive love affair of his with a robust widow, is prevented from accomplishing his purpose; but, nevertheless, gives out that he is actually dead. He passes himself off as a Mr. John Smith, and in that character is introduced to, and falls in love with, a Miss Colburn, the daughter of a wealthy old attorney, whose business is under the control of Mr. Richard Wise, his managing clerk. A wealthy uncle of the supposed dead man dies and leaves a large property behind him, which is claimed by a heretic, distant relation, Cornelius Tattenham, as the deceased uncle's next heir. Edward Armitage's difficulty consists in the fact that if he acknowledges his existence and claims the property, he is liable to be made the defendant in a breach-of-promise case, in which the robust widow, Lady Driver Kidd, would figure as plaintiff. However, Lady Kidd, under the impression that Edward Armitage is dead, engages herself to Cornelius Tattenham; and, on the strength of this fact, Edward Armitage is prevailed upon to acknowledge his identity, and his friend, Richard Wise, ingeniously accounts for Edward's extraordinary conduct by explaining that his death was simulated in order to test the widow's affection for him. This story is told, rather obscurely, in three long acts; the dialogue is in parts extremely good; but these parts are few and far between, and the intermediate portions are undeniably dull. Many of the speeches are much too long, and a great deal of irrelevant matter is introduced which the author will do wisely to exclude. Moreover, some of the incidents of the comedy are much too farcical in their nature, particularly in the second act, which is badly constructed and foolishly worked out. The first act is by far the best of the three. The most marked character in the piece is that of the speculative Lady Driver Kidd, which is cleverly written throughout, and the part is played by Mrs. Stirling with extraordinary force and animation. Every line she has to give tells with its full effect upon a remarkably appreciative audience. It is seldom, indeed, that an author has the pleasure of hearing his words so effectively delivered. Mr. Charles Mathews, in Richard Wise, is provided with a part analogous in some respects to that of the handy surgeon in "The Overland Route." He rattles through it with his customary animation; but it hardly affords him a fair field for the display of his peculiar powers. Mr. Horace Wigan played Cornelius Tattenham with an original brogue that I, for one, could not interpret. Mr. Neville has a very bad—a dreadfully bad—part as Edward Armitage, the "dead man," and he does not improve it by overacting his by-play. Mr. Addison threw a great deal of character into the part of the good-natured, but failing, old attorney; his singular command of facial expression did him good service in the earlier scenes. Finally, Miss Louisa Moore played the old attorney's pretty daughter with much grace and delicacy; but she must find the long-winded didactic that are put into her mouth very difficult things to deal with. The scenery is pretty good. On the whole, the author may be said to have achieved a success, and he bowed his acknowledgments, at the end of the piece, in answer to a general call.

Last week Mr. Burnand's "Black-eyed Susan" accomplished its three-hundredth-and-something night at the NEW ROYALTY THEATRE, and a Mr. F. C. Burnand (not, of course, the author of the piece, but, curiously enough, a gentleman with the same name and initials) recited a complimentary ode to the other Mr. F. C. Burnand, in which he paid that gentleman some delicate compliments on the remarkable run his burlesque has achieved.

The American Circus Company, which attracted great attention in Paris during the past summer, is now performing at the HOLBORN AMPHITHEATRE, and draws crowded houses.

The Imperial Japanese Company, from the Court of Jeddo, will commence an engagement at Her Majesty's Theatre on the 16th inst.

MARKET FOR FOREIGN CATTLE.—A statement was made to the Board of Works on Monday to the effect that the Government was extremely anxious, with a view to the prevention of danger from the cattle disease, that there should be established a foreign cattle market as near as possible to the place of disembarkation, where all such cattle might be sold and slaughtered. A bill had been prepared to carry out this design, and Sir John Thwaites said he had told the Government that he did not know what the views of the board were, but if it were to be done the proper body to erect and manage such a market in the metropolis would be the Board of Works. Mr. Lowman Taylor protested against such an opposition being set up against the Islington Cattle Market, which had been erected at a cost of £500,000 at the request of the then Government. A resolution expressive of willingness to undertake this additional duty was eventually passed by the board. Mr. Lowman Taylor denounced the transaction later in the day at the Court of Common Council.



SOUVENIRS OF THE PARIS EXHIBITION : JAPANESE WOMEN, AND INTERIOR OF THE PALACE OF THE GOVERNOR OF SATSUMA.

SOUVENIRS OF THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

THE MULATTO GIRL.

As we said some time ago, the pictures which may yet remain in the artists' sketch-books relating to the Paris Exhibition will be no longer illustrations, but souvenirs. The Exhibition itself is at an end—the curtain is down; the lights are out; and the great show, which has kept all Europe, half Asia, a good deal of America, and a big piece of Africa interested for nearly a year, is all over. The fountains have ceased to play; the park is deserted, or only frequented by the spectres of fitting enterprisers, inventors, and patentees. The hungry, tired, and thirsty public no longer crowd the restaurants of the various nationalities; and there is nothing left for Paris to do but to sit down and count the cost and the gain, the profit and the loss, the hospitality and the extortion, for which there has been such unparalleled opportunity. What has become of all those extraordinary natives, though—those people of all climes and costumes, manners and customs; those children of remote lands (some of them, we fear, shams and sells, humble imitators of George Psalmanazar, and not real people of Formosa)—who were wont to attract such large audiences only a brief while ago? They can't all have vanished back again in a night. The Arab jeweller and the Egyptian turner have surely not been floated back to their several homes each on his little square of magic carpet; the gipsy band from Transylvania have never evaporated in a sudden explosion of Austrian bottled beer, surely; the Spanish guitars must be tinkling somewhere at this moment; the Japanese girls are not, it is to be hoped, still locked up in their darkened rabbit-hutch of varnished paper and lacquer-work, like a couple of sleek guinea-pigs; the Chinese maidens are surely sipping tea at some place not a thousand miles from the Boulevard; and even the Russian samoodars may be steaming in the Street of Sebastopol! There is the stentorian negro, too, the seller of queer fruits and drinks, who howled and roared for an audience, and drew crowds by the very force of lung and hideous contortion of his ebony visage: shall such power be lost to Europe for ever? A more pleasing picture was presented by the— we had almost written "fair"—mulattress from Bourbon, or, as some call it, Reunion. She was a comely and a wholesome representative of that French colony, and had a touch of the Parisienne in her brightly-languid manner—a Frenchwoman moulded of Vulcanite, as it were. We can put her into our columns by means of an Engraving, but where is the original? It is an awful thing to think that these people whom we have mentioned, or some of them at least, may reappear in London—that the Arab barber may exhibit at the next meeting of the hairdressers' association at Willis's Rooms; that the jeweller of Algiers may set up a stall at the Polytechnic; and the negro vociferator come to a breakdown at a music-hall, where the mulattress mixes rum-punch behind the refreshment counter. Let us hope that we shall have no such souvenirs as these of the French Great Exhibition of 1867.

THE JAPANESE HOUSE.

We have already spoken of the Japanese building in the park; but the Japanese were well represented at the Exhibition, and afforded us a glimpse of their domestic life by presenting an



SOUVENIRS OF THE PARIS EXHIBITION: THE MULATTO GIRL.

interior apartment imitated from the house of the Governor of Satsuma.

What a life it is, this conservative Oriental existence, with its sloth and ennui, smoking of tiny pipes, chewing of queer sweetmeats, and lazily fanning away the day, or looking over jewel-boxes, or counting beads! The only approach to regular employment seems to be writing and gossip; and the writing is as lazy a sort of calligraphy as can well be imagined; while the talk—well, nobody quite understands it. There is surely no life more melancholy than that of the Japanese women, except that of a European woman of fashion.

It is very quaint, this apartment, with its curiously-painted screens, its gaudy lanterns and lacquered ornamentation, its strange plants and porcelain; and the house itself is scarcely less remarkable, for it is built of wood only, of the lightest description, and with a wooden foundation little more substantial than that of an English summer-house. The roof is ordinarily either of varnished wood or of thatch, more rarely of tiles; so that it is easy to understand with what terrible rapidity a town may be burnt down in the dominions of the Tycoon. There is, of course very seldom more

than one story to these houses—or, rather, seldom any more than a ground floor; but they are surmounted by a sort of verandah, where the clothes are dried. The windows are made of transparent paper, and the furniture consists mostly of various chests and cabinets, containing the portable property of the inhabitants, and serving by day to hold the mattresses and bedding on which they sleep at night. In place of chairs and tables, the room is full of these chests and armoires, writing-desks, flower-pots, vases, tea-cups, and pots of sweetmeats. A mat or two and half a dozen pillows serve for repose, of which the young ladies who were at Paris as examples of the domestic life of the Japanese seemed to take a good deal without seeming much the worse for it; for they went on day after day with a little embroidery, a little pipe-smoking, a little letter-writing, a good deal of sleep, and perpetual fanning, without appearing to pine for their native air or to be more than occasionally conscious that they had come into a scene of European activity.

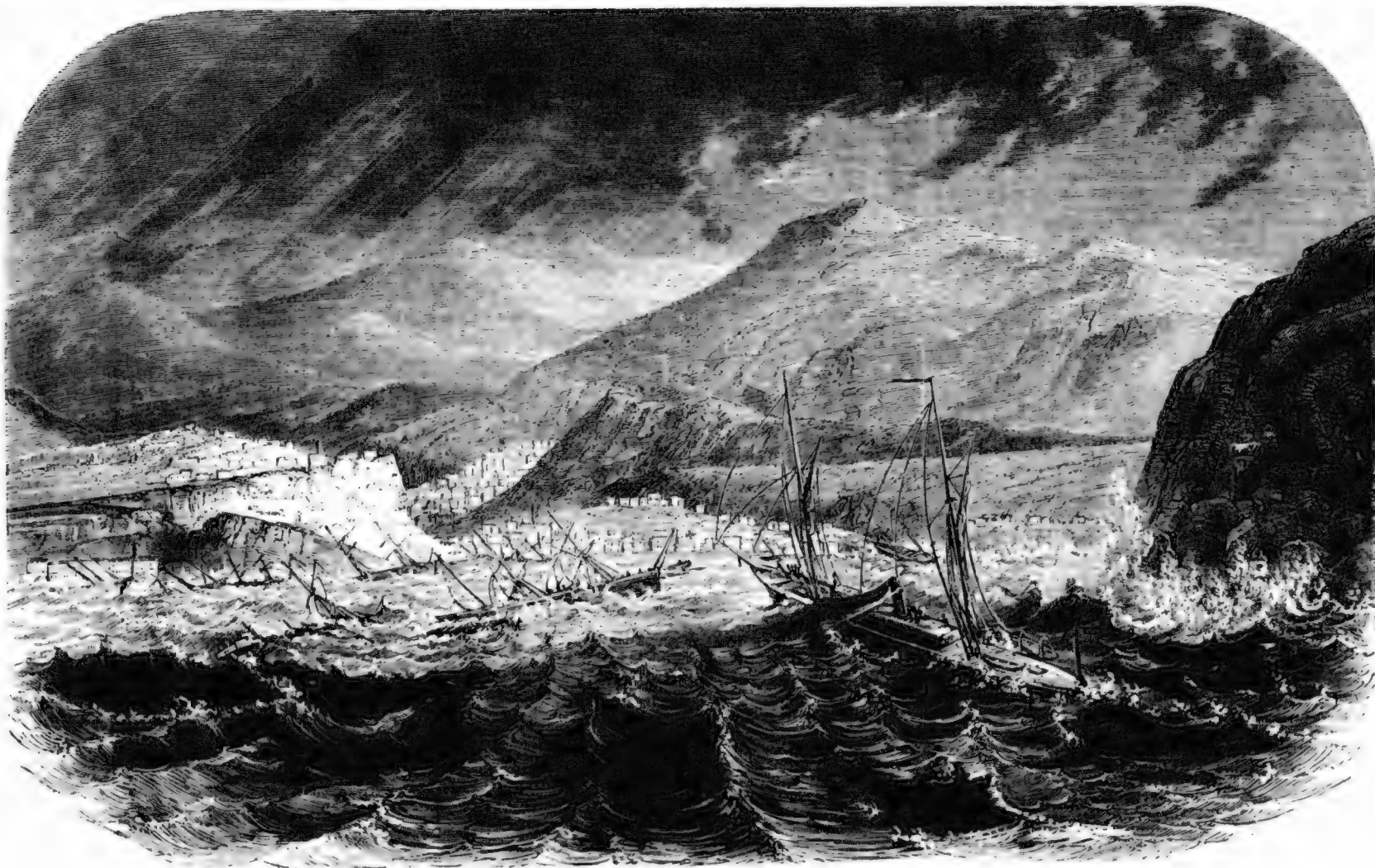
STORM IN THE BAY OF VALPARAISO.

A tempest which recently broke over the Bay of Valparaiso produced very serious results amongst the population of the town, and its ravages are not yet repaired; but, at least, the mutual help of the people and the recognition of bravery accompanied it, and mitigated some of its effects on the public mind.

The incident represented in our Engraving took place during the height of the hurricane. A Danish barque, named the *Amelia*, was driving fast to destruction on the coast, and in sight of the look-out on board the French ship *Indienne*, the second officer of which saw a woman and a child on the deck of the ill-fated vessel. He immediately called his men together and said that every effort must be made to save these two lives at all events; and in response to his appeal five brave fellows put off in their life-boat and rowed towards the vessel. The sea was so furious, however, that they were capsized just as they were alongside, and one of the men, Samuel Noil, perished. A subscription has been set on foot for his family, and a sum of money is already in the hands of the French Consul.

DIVERS IN PARIS.

LONDONERS have already learned all about the perfection to which the diving apparatus has been brought, and an account has appeared in our columns of the operations effected at Blackfriars Bridge by the men who worked under the water down on the river bed. Thousands of people went daily to see the queer, huge-headed monsters go on their subaqueous journeys and to watch the man who pumped the air supply down into those vast metal helmets. Well, all this has lately been repeated in Paris, and experiments have been made not only in a circular human aquarium like that at the Polytechnic, but in the Seine itself, where the men go off a platform something like that behind the bath-houses at Margate. The English invention, which is known as the Scaphandre, has received some slight additions at the hands of M.M. Reuquayrol, mining engineer, and Denayrouse, Lieutenant in the naval service. The air-reservoir is at the back; and the men go in and out with wonderful facility.



STORM IN THE BAY OF VALPARAISO.

OPERA AND CONCERTS

MR. MAPLESON announces the final performances of his present season. The last great attraction at Her Majesty's Theatre is "Don Giovanni," with Mdlle. Titiens as Donna Anna and Mdlle. Kellogg as Zerlina. To-night "Fidelio" is to be performed, with Mdlle. Titiens in the principal character.

The Crystal Palace directors have increased their claims upon the goodwill of the public by the production of the most important musical work that has been given to the world for the last twenty years. The Crystal Palace, founded for all sorts of good purposes, has, above all, lived and prospered upon music. Apart from all the great triennial festivals for which it is celebrated throughout Europe, it has gained special renown in England by its weekly orchestral performances; and Mr. Manns, the able director of the Crystal Palace band, has shown untiring energy in the presentation of compositions by modern German masters, which, but for him, would have been known very little, or not known at all, in this country. In this particular line the bringing out of Mendelssohn's "Reformation Symphony," must be regarded as his greatest achievement; and now that this work has been shown in all its beauty, it seems impossible that any of the composer's minor productions should still be kept in the dark. The "Reformation Symphony" is only just beginning its career; but whereas twenty years ago there was only one hall in London—that of the Philharmonic Society—where it could have been heard, there are now three or four (without including the concert-room at Sydenham) at which, before the end of the present winter season, we may expect it to be performed. Its production on Saturday at the Crystal Palace was an event of which the importance was fully recognised by the world of music. Such an audience of connoisseurs and amateurs had assembled as can only be brought together by a really great occasion; and the symphony was listened to with attention, and applauded with an enthusiasm that might have been expected from a public of education and discernment. Of all the pieces left by Mendelssohn there is not one which has excited so much interest as the symphony in D, written for the festival held in Berlin in 1830, in memory of the Reformation. About the work in question it could not be argued, as about some of Mendelssohn's other posthumous productions that it was not complete, and was therefore not a full and fair example of the composer's genius. Yet, for some unknown reason, it was more persistently kept back than the overture to "Ruy Blas," which Mendelssohn had not quite decided upon publishing, and the pieces from "Lorelei," which notoriously belong to an unfinished opera. The "Reformation Symphony" was ready for Berlin, for Dresden, for Leipzig, for Paris—for any public to which there might be an opportunity of presenting it; and it was only from want of opportunity that, up to the time of Mendelssohn's death, it was never produced at all. Since then it has been the fault, not of concert societies, but of Mendelssohn's executors, that the great work has remained unknown; and it is said to be owing to the representations of his son, Herr Karl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, that permission to produce the "Reformation Symphony" has at last been granted. In causing everything that his father has written to be published, the son will show as much respect for his memory as in bringing out the "Complete Life," on which he is said to be engaged.

The Rev. J. E. Cox writes to repudiate the authorship of an article which appeared, about a year ago, in *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, giving an account of a performance which had not taken place. We are glad to hear that Mr. Cox did not write the article in question; and we should be happy, for Mr. Cox's own sake, to be assured that he also did not write the paper in the *Broadway* (which, however, bears his signature) called "Musical Criticism." To speak of a minor point, Mr. Cox's account, from imagination, of some of the internal arrangements of the principal London journals, is only worthy of the critic who did contribute to *Bell's Weekly Messenger* the notice of the performance which neither he nor anyone else had witnessed. Mr. Cox calls our just rebuke "an attack." All we did was to defend ourselves and our brethren, as best we could, against his sweeping accusations.

THE CAB QUESTION.

THE STRIKE ON TUESDAY EVENING.

FROM four o'clock on Tuesday evening, most of the principal thoroughfares of the City and the rest of the metropolis, the ordinary street cabs, as a rule, ceased to run. At all the metropolitan railway stations and the various stands there were none to be found, and throughout the whole evening it was rare to see a single cab between the Royal Exchange and Charing-cross. As an exception, whenever one made its appearance, which it occasionally did, the driver was hooted by some of his own fraternity, who congregated in the principal streets or were on their way to or from the meeting at Exeter Hall. The difference in the appearance of the streets resulting from so large a withdrawal from the ordinary traffic can hardly be conceived by those who did not witness it, or who do not recollect the similar strike in the late Mr. Fitzroy's tenure of office in the Home Department. It would be still more difficult to estimate the consequent inconvenience to the public or the loss to the cab proprietors and drivers. Most of our readers will be aware that the strike has its origin in the provision in the new Metropolitan Street Traffic Act which requires every cab to be provided with a lamp at night, both in the interest of the public and of the proprietors and drivers themselves. On the ground of the attendant cost chiefly, and also on that of the difficulty of adapting a lamp to an ordinary square cab, the masters and men object to this regulation. A few evenings ago, when the Amendment Bill designed to remedy the grievances of the costermongers was under consideration in the House of Commons, Alderman Lawrence tried to procure the repeal of the obnoxious clause, on behalf of the cab proprietors, but in vain; and, by way of retaliation, the trade has had recourse to a strike, which threatens to last until the beginning of January.

THE CABMAN'S CASE.

The cabmen met on Tuesday night in Exeter Hall to concert measures to procure amendment of those clauses of the Street Act of last Session which affect them. They filled the hall in every part, and the chairman, Mr. Gower, of Barbican, congratulating them on their numbers, told them that the hall was calculated "to carry" upwards of 5000 persons. Large numbers of men were unable to gain admission, and these were conducted by a driver well known among them to Trafalgar-square, and there harangued from the pedestal of Nelson's column. The meeting in the hall was kept in excellent order by a number of men stationed in the gangways, who, acting promptly on the hint from the chairman, stayed any too extravagant exhibitions of feeling; indeed, the only disturbance throughout the evening arose from the summary ejection of a not very sober cab proprietor from the platform in consequence of his persistent determination to speak. The cabman's grievance as disclosed in the course of the evening resolved itself into three points—the duty, which was declared exorbitant; the mileage, which was pronounced insufficient; and the lamps, which were altogether objected to. Resolutions were come to urging the necessity of amendment in each of these respects, and mention was made by some of the speakers of certain minor grievances, such as the payment by the cab proprietors of £12,000 a year to the railway companies for permission to enter the stations; this charge they required should be altogether abolished. Another matter of great interest was the supervision exercised by Scotland-yard. As the secretary put it, "We don't want a strike, it costs us too much; but the giving of more power to Scotland-yard, that we cannot stand." The anger of the cabmen at Sir Richard Mayne broke out on every possible occasion; they seemed to look upon him as the cause of all their troubles, real and imaginary; and, when one of the speakers demanded the reason why unclaimed lost property should not revert to the cabman as it remained in the hands of the railway companies, their indignation with the police could with difficulty be suppressed.

The first question touched on was that of the duty, and Mr. Baldwin, an old proprietor, moved the resolution against it. He

stated that, in round numbers, the cabman paid £20 a year duty for every £50 worth of property he worked. The £20 was made up of £18 5s. a year duty and £1 a year for license, and £50 represented the average price of a cab and horse. The post-horse masters could keep their carriages and four horses for £15 a year duty; three cabs and only three horses cost a cab proprietor £51 15s., the newly-imposed lamps would cost £21 more; so that the case stood in this way—£75 15s. for the cab proprietor as against £15 for the post-master.

Mr. Cochrane, the seconder of the resolution, pointed out that the cab proprietors paid £122,049 a year in taxes—a sum which would take the Abyssinian expedition a long way towards King Theodore. He then stated his own case. He and his partner owned fourteen cabs, and they paid four times as much in the form of duty as in rental, and twice as much as they both received out of the business. In 1865 they took £2677 14s. 2d., and spent £2668 10s. 2d., including £25s. a week each for their work of fourteen hours a day. The balance left them £9 4s. to divide at the end of the year as the profit on the working of £800 worth of property. In 1866 they took £2784 18s. 3d., and spent £2772 11s. 6d., leaving a balance of £12 profit above the 25s. a week each. He looked upon a cab as as much a necessity as tea, wine, tobacco, insurance policies, or as omnibuses; and asked for a reduction of duty. With reference to the general question, he endorsed Mr. Cole's expression of opinion at the Society of Arts, that fares should be left for the public to settle, and that the public should be the inspectors. Then he dealt with the arguments used in the House of Commons in 1853 by Mr. Fitzroy, in whose honour they had christened sixpences "Fitzs." Mr. Fitzroy had urged the introduction of the 6d. because it was seldom gentlemen had change, and they would in that case be obliged to give 1s.; and he had suggested that the cabmen could well afford that reduction, because, while oats were at 23s. 10d. in 1831, when 8d. tariff was fixed in 1853 they were only 19s. 8d. To-day, however, oats were 29s. 6d. The cabmen of Liverpool and Birmingham had 1s. How much more, then, should the men of London, with their heavier taxes? And as for the Paris cabmen, he had been told that it gave one the itch to ride in their vehicles after a London hansom. He didn't believe there were any such whips in the world as those on the London hansom, who, in case of need, could carry a gentleman from London Bridge to Paddington in half an hour. They only wanted paying, and it was a mistake to suppose that they were best paid in the West-End. He could state as a fact that when the House was sitting some members "would actually walk to Cockspur-street to get a cab to the Conservative for 6d."

Lord Elcho, who had shortly before arrived, was then introduced by the chairman; he was received with rounds of cheers; and, in the first place, explained why he had come, in order that it might not be thought he was popularity hunting. The other day a cabman who drove him to Kensington Museum asked him for his support, and the conversation which ensued led to an interview the next day between him and three representatives of the cabmen, at which he promised to see Mr. Hardy. He saw him on Friday night, and expressed his opinion that the duty was already too heavy, without having the cost of the lamp added to it; that the matter had been decided too hastily last Session, and that the whole question of metropolitan traffic required further consideration. This was necessary, not only because of the present hitch, but for other reasons. There were some who could afford no more than 6d., although at times a cab was absolutely necessary to them; but the question did not affect the poor only; all classes had to be considered, and the want of many was a conveyance better than a sixpenny cab and less costly than a half-guinea brougham. Whether free trade would supply this was a subject for inquiry. He therefore recommended Mr. Hardy to get the cab clauses in the Street Act of last Session suspended until a Committee of the House of Commons had considered the whole subject and recommended a course satisfactory to the public, the proprietors, and the drivers. On Monday the secretary waited on him again, and he asked whether the committee would allow things to go on as usual if Mr. Hardy would agree, if possible, to secure the suspension of the clauses. The secretary could not promise this, but believed the committee would consent. He saw Mr. Hardy last evening, with Lord Derby; and, although they could not give a decisive answer upon the subject, they empowered him to say that they would receive a deputation, of say three drivers and three proprietors, to-day at one o'clock. He would introduce the deputation, and perhaps before that time the Government would have made up its mind about the matter. He had no authority for saying so, but he believed the answer would be favourable. He urged upon Mr. Hardy, on the principle that sauce to the goose is sauce to the gander, that if cabs were compelled to use lamps, lamps also should be carried by Pickford's vans and gentlemen's carriages. The custom of carrying lights in France was not confined to Paris, or to carriages, but extended throughout the country, and to all descriptions of vehicle; even the common country carts carried lights. In conclusion, he noticed that the resolutions charged the Legislature with "bungling," and recommended the cabmen "to resist the law;" he suggested that, in order to avoid offence, these words should be struck out, and that the cabmen might show they were loyal and law abiding. After some discussion, which threatened to be angry at one time, the suggestion was complied with.

A motion in favour of increased mileage was moved by Mr. Sellas, who said it was quite a mistake to suppose that the shilling hiring from the stand would keep empty cabs from the streets. Besides the consideration that a cabman might be required to go two miles for the shilling, there was another and a more important one. Even if the shilling did keep cabs on the stand, it would be most effectual in keeping people off; Mrs. Skinfint would not send to the stand for a cab, she would wait until one passed by, on the principle that he would be satisfied with sixpence or he would not be on the road. He was much amused at the difficulty experienced by Sir Richard Mayne to find a place to put the lamp; if placed on the side it would be in the way of getting the luggage up and down; if on the top the driver would hide it; and if on the dashboard the horse might put his tail before it, and, some horses having a knack of cocking their tails up, it might thus be rendered unfit for public use. The difficulty, however, could be easily got over if the cabman was placed in a position to afford lamps.

The motion was seconded by Mr. G. Smith, who had driven a cab for fifteen years, and had never been taken before a magistrate. He said the cabman had already five Acts of Parliament, with an aggregate of 576 clauses, and that, he should have thought, was sufficient without the new one. The penalties imposed by these Acts amounted in all to £50, so that every time a driver mounted the box he made himself liable to that extent. The new Act added £6 to the £50. As to the cabman's question, Sir Richard Mayne stated in his evidence that there were 250 stands in London, capable of accommodating 2471 cabs; but it happened that London had 5877 cabs, so that the 3406 had to go on what was called "the long rank," and then they were liable to 6d. fares and a summons. In conclusion, Mr. Smith drew a round of hisses from his hearers by reminding them that the numbers of all the cabs which had bills on them advertising the meeting had been taken, and that every cab-yard had been visited by the police that evening to see whether the men were out or not. He believed there was an object in this, and he hoped Lord Elcho and others who sympathised with them would see that no harm came to them on account of it.

The mover of a resolution against the lamps declared that it was impossible to do with only one lamp for a cab, although only one was carried. He calculated that to carry out the directions issued the charge would be £27 10s. a year. Mr. Evans, who seconded the motion, calculated that the lamp to his hansom cost him 3d. for kerosene oil each winter night. The oil cost 2d. a gill, and a gill was not sufficient to keep the lamp going from half-past three until two in the morning; and although the lamp cost 14s. it sometimes failed; and he seemed deeply impressed with the conviction that if it failed by accident, however far beyond the driver's control, the police and the magistrate would give him no quarter. He concluded by summing up the cabman's virtues. He is not the man who beats

his wife, nor he who gets fined for drunkenness, but he is the man who brings murderers such as Müller to justice. The cab proprietors were equally worthy; they never opened British Banks or got up London, Chatham and Dover Railways. He therefore asked for justice at the hands of Parliament, and, reminding the meeting that members of the House of Commons were not to be moved by intimidation, he recommended them to work their case by legitimate means, and show that they were loyal subjects. He was proceeding to instil a few teetotal principles into their minds and to offer himself as a commendable example, when he was constrained to conclude by cries of "Question!"

A fourth resolution pledged the proprietors and drivers to withdraw their cabs from the streets at four o'clock each day until the first Monday in January; and, if redress was not forthcoming at that time, to take out licenses to enable them to let from the yard, and thus save three fourths of the duty, and be rid of the lamp-charge into the bargain. It was, however, also resolved, with a view to carry out Lord Elcho's suggestion, that the meeting would act in accordance with any decision their acting committee might come to after hearing the Home Secretary's answer the next day (Wednesday).

DEPUTATION TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

A deputation, appointed at the cabmen's meeting at Exeter Hall on Tuesday evening, had an interview with Mr. Gathorne Hardy on Wednesday. Lord Elcho, M.P., stated the complaint; and was supported by Mr. Gower, of the Horse Repository, Barbican; Alderman Salomons, M.P., and Sir G. Bowyer, M.P. Mr. Hardy replied that a clause would be introduced in the Amendment Act now before the House of Lords, giving power to the Home Secretary, in his discretion, not to enforce certain portions of the Act. In the mean time no prosecutions would take place for breaches of the clause requiring lamps. The result of this determination is that the cabs are plying as usual. Several cabmen were heavily fined at the police courts on Wednesday, for assaults upon a few of their brethren who declined to join the movement and continued to work after four o'clock on the previous evening.

ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOT INSTITUTION.

ON Thursday a meeting of this institution was held at its house, John-street, Adelphi—Thomas Chapman, Esq., F.R.S., in the chair. Richard Lewis, Esq., the secretary, having read the minutes of the previous meeting, rewards amounting to £538 were ordered to be given to the crews of the following life-boats of the institution for their noble services during the late fearful gale:—The life-boat stationed at Poole, Dorset, saved forty-six lives from the brig Contest, of Guernsey; the Grocers' life-boat at Mundesley, Norfolk, rescued seven men from the brig George, of Sunderland, and the schooner Restless, of Peterhead. One of the crew of the life-boat had plunged into the boiling surf to snatch one poor fellow from an inevitable death. During the fearful storm of Sunday the life-boat Princess of Wales, at Holyhead, was engaged throughout the night in her noble mission, and actually succeeded in rescuing fifty-two lives from six different wrecks. The Penarth life-boat saved the crew of eleven men of the brig Marie, of Griefswald, Prussia. The Caister life-boat, the Birmingham No. 2, assisted by a steam-tug, brought the Norwegian schooner Polydesa and her crew of five men safely into harbour. The Licensed Victualler life-boat, stationed at Hunstanton, was the means of rescuing sixteen men from the barque Thetis, of Gothenburg. The Lowestoft life-boat also succeeded in saving two men from the brigantine Madara, of Yarmouth. The Yarmouth surf life-boat brought into harbour the smack Plowman, of Yarmouth, and her crew of seven men. The Bradford life-boat, at Ramsgate, saved the crew of eight men of the brigantine Amor, of Eidsfjord; it likewise brought the brig Cruiser, of Hartlepool, and her crew of six men into harbour. The Whitburn life-boat rescued six men from the brig Jenny, of Whitby. The St. Ives life-boat had brought ashore one man from a wrecked vessel. The boat had made four attempts to rescue the shipwrecked crew. The Winterton life-boat saved two men from the schooner Sophia, of Colchester. The Skegness life-boat (the Herbert Ingram) rescued two men from the Aunt, on Boston. The Sutton life-boat (the Birmingham No. 1) saved seven men from the brig Clarinda, of Sunderland; and the Portrush life-boat rescued after two previous attempts, six men from the brigantine Vitruvius, of Liverpool; making a total of 184 lives rescued by the life-boats of the institution during the recent heavy gales from different shipwrecks. The life-boats of the institution at Newhaven, Porthmadoc, Bembridge, Hasborough, Dover, Kessingland, and many other places had also been out with the view of saving life. In some cases the vessels had happily got out of danger, in others the life-boats had only arrived in time to see the ships in a thousand pieces and their crews drowned. Such a terrific gale has not been witnessed on our shores since the storm which wrecked the Royal Charter, on the Anglesea coast. Various other rewards were also granted to the crews of various shore-boats for saving life from different shipwrecks on our coasts. The committee expressed their deepest commiseration with the families of the poor men who perished from the Gorleston life-boat on Tuesday morning last. It should, however, be distinctly understood that the life-boat is a salvage-boat belonging exclusively to the beachmen, and is in no way connected with the National Life-boat Institution. It is the same boat that, unhappily, capsized nearly two years since, with a fatal loss of life. There is a fine, self-righting life-boat belonging to the institution at Gorleston, but hitherto the beachmen have not made much use of it. The committee also expressed their deep sympathy with the relatives of the sufferers at St. Thomas, in the West Indies, during the late fearful hurricane there.

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VESEUVIUS.—The eruption of Vesuvius continues and increases, so as to awaken considerable apprehension in the villages which surround it. On the 25th ult. the shocks at Torre del Greco were so violent that the population were in trembling expectation of a renewal of the disasters of 1861. In Resina, on the night following, the staircase of a house was thrown down, and another house opened in the middle, so that the inhabitants of that street fled. The spectacle as it is witnessed from Naples has now become magnificent, as a vast stream of lava is flowing down. Strangers are coming in daily to see this rare and grand demonstration of Vesuvius.

GOVERNMENT OF THE METROPOLIS.—On Monday night an adjourned conference, composed principally of vestrymen, and convened for the purpose of discussing the various schemes for the improvement of the local government of the metropolis, was held at St. James's Hall. A very warm discussion took place with reference to Mr. Mill's Metropolitan Government Bill, the great majority of those present condemning the measure strongly and deprecating any change so sweeping as that proposed by the hon. member for Westminster. The supporters of the hon. gentleman's scheme could scarcely obtain a hearing, and a resolution condemnatory of the measure was adopted.

OPERA AND CONCERTS

MR. MAPLESON announces the final performances of his present season. The last great attraction at Her Majesty's Theatre is "Don Giovanni," with Mdlle. Titiens as Donna Anna and Mdlle. Kellogg as Zerlina. To-night "Fidelio" is to be performed, with Mdlle. Titiens in the principal character.

The Crystal Palace directors have increased their claims upon the goodwill of the public by the production of the most important musical work that has been given to the world for the last twenty years. The Crystal Palace, founded for all sorts of good purposes, has, above all, lived and prospered upon music. Apart from all the great triennial festivals for which it is celebrated throughout Europe, it has gained special renown in England by its weekly orchestral performances; and Mr. Manns, the able director of the Crystal Palace band, has shown untiring energy in the presentation of compositions by modern German masters, which, but for him, would have been known very little, or not known at all, in this country. In this particular line the bringing out of Mendelssohn's "Reformation Symphony," must be regarded as his greatest achievement; and now that this work has been shown in all its beauty, it seems impossible that any of the composer's minor productions should still be kept in the dark. The "Reformation Symphony" is only just beginning its career; but whereas twenty years ago there was only one hall in London—that of the Philharmonic Society—where it could have been heard, there are now three or four (without including the concert-room at Sydenham) at which, before the end of the present winter season, we may expect it to be performed. Its production on Saturday at the Crystal Palace was an event of which the importance was fully recognised by the world of music. Such an audience of connoisseurs and amateurs had assembled as can only be brought together by a really great occasion; and the symphony was listened to with attention, and applauded with an enthusiasm that might have been expected from a public of education and discernment. Of all the pieces left by Mendelssohn there is not one which has excited so much interest as the symphony in D, written for the festival held in Berlin in 1830, in memory of the Reformation. About the work in question it could not be argued, as about some of Mendelssohn's other posthumous productions that it was not complete, and was therefore not a full and fair example of the composer's genius. Yet, for some unknown reason, it was more persistently kept back than the overture to "Ruy Blas," which Mendelssohn had not quite decided upon publishing, and the pieces from "Lorelei," which notoriously belong to an unfinished opera. The "Reformation Symphony" was ready for Berlin, for Dresden, for Leipzig, for Paris—for any public to which there might be an opportunity of presenting it; and it was only from want of opportunity that, up to the time of Mendelssohn's death, it was never produced at all. Since then it has been the fault, not of concert societies, but of Mendelssohn's executors, that the great work has remained unknown; and it is said to be owing to the representations of his son, Herr Karl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, that permission to produce the "Reformation Symphony" has at last been granted. In causing everything that his father has written to be published, the son will show as much respect for his memory as in bringing out the "Complete Life," on which he is said to be engaged.

The Rev. J. E. Cox writes to repudiate the authorship of an article which appeared, about a year ago, in *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, giving an account of a performance which had not taken place. We are glad to hear that Mr. Cox did not write the article in question; and we should be happy, for Mr. Cox's own sake, to be assured that he also did not write the paper in the *Broadway* (which, however, bears his signature) called "Musical Critics Criticised." To speak of a minor point, Mr. Cox's account, from imagination, of some of the internal arrangements of the principal London journals, is only worthy of the critic who did contribute to *Bell's Weekly Messenger* the notice of the performance which neither he nor anyone else had witnessed. Mr. Cox calls our just rebuke "an attack." All we did was to defend ourselves and our brethren, as best we could, against his sweeping accusations.

THE CAB QUESTION.

THE STRIKE ON TUESDAY EVENING.

FROM four o'clock on Tuesday evening, most of the principal thoroughfares of the City and the rest of the metropolis, the ordinary street cabs, as a rule, ceased to run. At all the metropolitan railway stations and the various stands there were none to be found, and throughout the whole evening it was rare to see a single cab between the Royal Exchange and Charing-cross. As an exception, whenever one made its appearance, which it occasionally did, the driver was hooted by some of his own fraternity, who congregated in the principal streets or were on their way to or from the meeting at Exeter Hall. The difference in the appearance of the streets resulting from so large a withdrawal from the ordinary traffic can hardly be conceived by those who did not witness it, or who do not recollect the similar strike in the late Mr. Fitzroy's tenure of office in the Home Department. It would be still more difficult to estimate the consequent inconvenience to the public or the loss to the cab proprietors and drivers. Most of our readers will be aware that the strike has its origin in the provision in the new Metropolitan Street Traffic Act which requires every cab to be provided with a lamp at night, both in the interest of the public and of the proprietors and drivers themselves. On the ground of the attendant cost chiefly, and also on that of the difficulty of adapting a lamp to an ordinary square cab, the masters and men object to this regulation. A few evenings ago, when the Amendment Bill designed to remedy the grievances of the costermongers was under consideration in the House of Commons, Alderman Lawrence tried to procure the repeal of the obnoxious clause, on behalf of the cab proprietors, but in vain; and, by way of retaliation, the trade has had recourse to a strike, which threatens to last until the beginning of January.

THE CABMAN'S CASE.

The cabmen met on Tuesday night in Exeter Hall to concert measures to procure amendment of those clauses of the Street Act of last Session which affect them. They filled the hall in every part, and the chairman, Mr. Gower, of Barbican, congratulating them on their numbers, told them that the hall was calculated "to carry" upwards of 5000 persons. Large numbers of men were unable to gain admission, and these were conducted by a driver well known among them to Trafalgar-square, and there harangued from the pedestal of Nelson's column. The meeting in the hall was kept in excellent order by a number of men stationed in the gangways, who, acting promptly on the hint from the chairman, stayed any too extravagant exhibitions of feeling; indeed, the only disturbance throughout the evening arose from the summary ejection of a not very sober cab proprietor from the platform in consequence of his persistent determination to speak. The cabman's grievance as disclosed in the course of the evening resolved itself into three points—the duty, which was declared exorbitant; the mileage, which was pronounced insufficient; and the lamps, which were altogether objected to. Resolutions were come to urging the necessity of amendment in each of these respects, and mention was made by some of the speakers of certain minor grievances, such as the payment by the cab proprietors of £12,000 a year to the railway companies for permission to enter the stations; this charge they required should be altogether abolished. Another matter of great interest was the supervision exercised by Scotland-yard. As the secretary put it, "We don't want a strike, it costs us too much; but the giving of more power to Scotland-yard, that we cannot stand." The anger of the cabmen at Sir Richard Mayne broke out on every possible occasion; they seemed to look upon him as the cause of all their troubles, real and imaginary; and, when one of the speakers demanded the reason why unclaimed lost property should not revert to the cabman as it remained in the hands of the railway companies, their indignation with the police could with difficulty be suppressed.

The first question touched on was that of the duty, and Mr. Baldwin, an old proprietor, moved the resolution against it. He

stated that, in round numbers, the cabman paid £20 a year duty for every £50 worth of property he worked. The £20 was made up of £18 5s. a year duty and £1 a year for license, and £50 represented the average price of a cab and horse. The post-horse masters could keep their carriages and four horses for £15 a year duty; three cabs and only three horses cost a cab proprietor £51 15s., the newly-imposed lamps would cost £21 more; so that the case stood in this way—£75 15s. for the cab proprietor as against £15 for the post-master.

Mr. Cochrane, the seconder of the resolution, pointed out that the cab proprietors paid £122,049 a year in taxes—a sum which would take the Abyssinian expedition a long way towards King Theodore. He then stated his own case. He and his partner owned fourteen cabs, and they paid four times as much in the form of duty as in rental, and twice as much as they both received out of the business. In 1865 they took £2677 14s. 2d., and spent £2668 10s. 2d., including £25s. a week each for their work of fourteen hours a day. The balance left them £9 4s. to divide at the end of the year as the profit on the working of £800 worth of property. In 1866 they took £2784 18s. 2d., and spent £2772 11s. 6d., leaving a balance of £12 profit above the 25s. a week each. He looked upon a cab as as much a necessity as tea, wine, tobacco, insurance policies, or as omnibuses; and asked for a reduction of duty. With reference to the general question, he indorsed Mr. Cole's expression of opinion at the Society of Arts, that fares should be left for the public to settle, and that the public should be the inspectors. Then he dealt with the arguments used in the House of Commons in 1853 by Mr. Fitzroy, in whose honour they had christened sixpences "Fitzes." Mr. Fitzroy had urged the introduction of the 6d. because it was seldom gentlemen had change, and they would in that case be obliged to give 1s.; and he had suggested that the cabmen could well afford that reduction, because, while oats were at 23s. 10d. in 1831, when 8d. tariff was fixed in 1853 they were only 19s. 8d. To-day, however, oats were 29s. 6d. The cabmen of Liverpool and Birmingham had 1s. How much more, then, should the men of London, with their heavier taxes? And as for the Paris cabmen, he had been told that it gave one the itch to ride in their vehicles after a London hansom. He didn't believe there were any such whips in the world as those on the London hansom, who, in case of need, could carry a gentleman from London Bridge to Paddington in half an hour. They only wanted paying, and it was a mistake to suppose that they were best paid in the West-End. He could state as a fact that when the House was sitting some members "would actually walk to Cockspur-street to get a cab to the Conservative for 6d."

Lord Elcho, who had shortly before arrived, was then introduced by the chairman; he was received with rounds of cheers; and, in the first place, explained why he had come, in order that it might not be thought he was popularity hunting. The other day a cabman who drove him to Kensington Museum asked him for his support, and the conversation which ensued led to an interview the next day between him and three representatives of the cabmen, at which he promised to see Mr. Hardy. He saw him on Friday night, and expressed his opinion that the duty was already too heavy, without having the cost of the lamp added to it; that the matter had been decided too hastily last Session, and that the whole question of metropolitan traffic required further consideration. This was necessary, not only because of the present hitch, but for other reasons. There were some who could afford no more than 6d., although at times a cab was absolutely necessary to them; but the question did not affect the poor only; all classes had to be considered, and the want of many was a conveyance better than a sixpenny cab and less costly than a half-guinea brougham. Whether free trade would supply this was a subject for inquiry. He therefore recommended Mr. Hardy to get the cab clauses in the Street Act of last Session suspended until a Committee of the House of Commons had considered the whole subject and recommended a course satisfactory to the public, the proprietors, and the drivers. On Monday the secretary waited on him again, and he asked whether the committee would allow things to go on as usual if Mr. Hardy would agree, if possible, to secure the suspension of the clauses. The secretary could not promise this, but believed the committee would consent. He saw Mr. Hardy last evening, with Lord Derby; and, although they could not give a decisive answer upon the subject, they empowered him to say that they would receive a deputation, of say three drivers and three proprietors, to-day at one o'clock. He would introduce the deputation, and perhaps before that time the Government would have made up its mind about the matter. He had no authority for saying so, but he believed the answer would be favourable. He urged upon Mr. Hardy, on the principle that sauce to the goose is sauce to the gander, that if cabs were compelled to use lamps, lamps also should be carried by Pickford's vans and gentlemen's carriages. The custom of carrying lights in France was not confined to Paris, or to carriages, but extended throughout the country, and to all descriptions of vehicle; even the common country carts carried lights. In conclusion, he noticed that the resolutions charged the Legislature with "bungling," and recommended the cabmen "to resist the law;" he suggested that, in order to avoid offence, these words should be struck out, and that the cabmen might show they were loyal and law-abiding. After some discussion, which threatened to be angry at one time, the suggestion was complied with.

A motion in favour of increased mileage was moved by Mr. Sellas, who said it was quite a mistake to suppose that the shilling hiring from the stand would keep empty cabs from the streets. Besides the consideration that a cabman might be required to go two miles for the shilling, there was another and a more important one. Even if the shilling did keep cabs on the stand, it would be most effectual in keeping people off; Mrs. Skinfint would not send to the stand for a cab, she would wait until one passed by, on the principle that he would be satisfied with sixpence or he would not be on the road. He was much amused at the difficulty experienced by Sir Richard Mayne to find a place to put the lamp: if placed on the side it would be in the way of getting the luggage up and down; if on the top the driver would hide it; and if on the dashboard the horse might put his tail before it, and some horses having a knack of cocking their tails up, it might thus be rendered unfit for public use. The difficulty, however, could be easily got over if the cabman was placed in a position to afford lamps.

The motion was seconded by Mr. G. Smith, who had driven a cab for fifteen years, and had never been taken before a magistrate. He said the cabman had already five Acts of Parliament, with an aggregate of 576 clauses, and that, he should have thought, was sufficient without the new one. The penalties imposed by these Acts amounted in all to £50, so that every time a driver mounted the box he made himself liable to that extent. The new Act added £6 to the £50. As to the cabstand question, Sir Richard Mayne stated in his evidence that there were 250 stands in London, capable of accommodating 2471 cabs; but it happened that London had 5877 cabs, so that the 3406 had to go on what was called "the long rank," and then they were liable to 6d. fares and a summons. In conclusion, Mr. Smith drew a round of bisces from his hearers by reminding them that the numbers of all the cabs which had bills on them advertising the meeting had been taken, and that every cabyard had been visited by the police that evening to see whether the men were out or not. He believed there was an object in this, and he hoped Lord Elcho and others who sympathised with them would see that no harm came to them on account of it.

The mover of a resolution against the lamps declared that it was impossible to do with only one lamp for a cab, although only one was carried. He calculated that to carry out the directions issued the charge would be £27 10s. a year. Mr. Evans, who seconded the motion, calculated that the lamp to his hansom cost him 3d. for coals and oil each winter night. The oil cost 2d. a gill, and a gill was not sufficient to keep the lamp going from half-past three until two in the morning; and although the lamp cost 14s. it sometimes failed; and he seemed deeply impressed with the conviction that if it failed by accident, however far beyond the driver's control, the police and the magistrate would give him no quarter. He concluded by summing up the cabman's virtues. He is not the man who beats

his wife, nor he who gets fined for drunkenness, but he is the man who brings murderers such as Müller to justice. The cab proprietors were equally worthy; they never opened British Banks or got up London, Chatham and Dover Railways. He therefore asked for justice at the hands of Parliament, and reminding the meeting that members of the House of Commons were not to be moved by intimidation, he recommended them to work their case by legitimate means, and show that they were loyal subjects. He was proceeding to instil a few teetotal principles into their minds and to offer himself as a commendable example, when he was constrained to conclude by cries of "Question!"

A fourth resolution pledged the proprietors and drivers to withdraw their cabs from the streets at four o'clock each day until the first Monday in January; and, if redress was not forthcoming at that time, to take out licenses to enable them to let from the yard, and thus save three fourths of the duty, and be rid of the lamp-charge into the bargain. It was, however, also resolved, with a view to carry out Lord Elcho's suggestion, that the meeting would act in accordance with any decision their acting committee might come to after hearing the Home Secretary's answer the next day (Wednesday).

DEPUTATION TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

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ON Thursday a meeting of this institution was held at its house, John-street, Adelphi—Thomas Chapman, Esq., F.R.S., in the chair. Richard Lewis, Esq., the secretary, having read the minutes of the previous meeting, rewards amounting to £338 were ordered to be given to the crews of the following life-boats of the institution for their noble services during the late fearful gale:—The life-boat stationed at Poole, Dorset, saved forty-six lives from the brig Contest, of Guernsey; the Grocers' life-boat at Mandeville, Norfolk, rescued seven men from the brig George, of Sunderland, and the schooner Restless, of Peterhead. One of the crew of the life-boat had plunged into the boiling surf to snatch one poor fellow from an inevitable death. During the fearful storm of Sunday the life-boat Princess of Wales, at Holyhead, was engaged throughout the night in her noble mission, and actually succeeded in rescuing fifty-two lives from six different wrecks. The Penarth life-boat saved the crew of eleven men of the brig Marie, of Griefswold, Prussia. The Calster life-boat, the Birmingham No. 2, assisted by a steam-tug, brought the Norwegian schooner Polydesa and her crew of five men safely into harbour. The Licensed Victualler life-boat, stationed at Hunstanton, was the means of rescuing sixteen men from the barque Thetis, of Gothenburg. The Lowestoft life-boat also succeeded in saving two men from the brigantine Madora, of Yarmouth. The Yarmouth surf life-boat brought into harbour the smack Ploverman, of Yarmouth, and her crew of seven men. The Bradford life-boat, at Ramsgate, saved the crew of eight men of the brigantine Amor, of Eislekette; it likewise brought the brig Cruiser, of Hartlepool, and her crew of six men into harbour. The Whitburn life-boat rescued six men from the brig Jenny, of Whitby. The St. Ives life-boat had brought ashore one man from a wrecked vessel. The boat had made four attempts to rescue the shipwrecked crew. The Winterton life-boat saved two men from the schooner Sophia, of Colchester. The Skegness life-boat (the Herbert Ingram) rescued two men from the Aunt, of Boston. The Sutton life-boat (the Birmingham No. 1) saved seven men from the brig Clarinda, of Sunderland; and the Portrush life-boat rescued, after two previous attempts, six men from the brigantine Vitruvius, of Liverpool; making a total of 184 lives rescued by the life-boats of the institution during the recent heavy gales from different shipwrecks. The life-boats of the institution at Newhaven, Porthcurn, Bournemouth, Hasborough, Dover, Kessingland, and many other places had also been out with the view of saving life. In some cases the vessels had happily got out of danger, in others the life-boats had only arrived in time to see the ships in a thousand pieces and their crews drowned. Such a terrific gale has not been witnessed on our shores since the storm which wrecked the Royal Charter, on the Anglesea coast. Various other rewards were also granted to the crews of various ship-boats for saving life from different shipwrecks on our coasts. The committee expressed their deepest commiseration with the families of the poor men who perished from the Gorleston life-boat on Tuesday morning last. It should, however, be distinctly understood that the life-boat is a salvage-boat belonging exclusively to the beachmen, and is in no way connected with the National Life-boat Institution. It is the same boat that, unhappily, capsized nearly two years since, with a fatal loss of life. There is a fine, self-righting life-boat belonging to the institution at Gorleston, but hitherto the beachmen have not made much use of it. The committee also expressed their deep sympathy with the relatives of the sufferers at St. Thomas, in the West Indies, during the late fearful hurricane there.

A very able report of a special committee, of which Admiral Ryder was the chairman, on the state of the life-boats of the institution, was read and approved. Payments amounting to nearly £2300 were ordered to be made on various life-boat establishments, making a total of £29,650 expended by the institution on its 186 life-boat stations during the eleven months of the present year. It had also during the same period contributed to the rescue of 1013 lives from various shipwrecks, nearly 200 of which had been saved by its life-boats during the recent heavy gales. Altogether, this noble society had contributed from its establishment to the saving of 16,914 lives from shipwreck. It was stated that the pressure on the funds of the society in carrying out its great and national work was very heavy at the present time, and that during the past few days £2500 of its funded capital had been ordered to be sold out. It is therefore hoped that the British public will strengthen the hands of the Life-boat Society at this stormy period of the year, when its life-boats are engaged night and day in battling with the storms and in snatching our fellow-creatures from the yawning waves. Sir Thomas Tobin, of Cork, sent the institution a first instalment of £100, being a contribution from the 72,000 persons whom he solicited to contribute towards the penny-subscription life-boat which Sir Thomas is now so zealously promoting. The committee decided to form a life-boat station at Milford Haven. Titus Salt, jun., Esq., of Bradford, had liberally contributed to the institution the boat and its equipment. Mrs. George Burgess had also presented to the society the Stonehaven life-boat and its transporting-carriage, &c. It was reported that the late Robert Hower, Esq., of Oldgate, Morpeth, had left a legacy of £25, free of duty, to the institution. The institution has just sent a new life-boat to Groomsport, near Belfast, the cost of the boat had been placed at the disposal of the society by a benevolent lady (Mrs. D.) residing in Berkshire. It was stated that it was proposed to hold a bazaar in Exeter in the early part of next year in aid of the funds of the institution. A letter was read from M. Standish, Esq., Chief Commissioner of Police at Melbourne, in which he asked to be supplied with 2000 copies of the "Instructions of the Institution for the Restoration of the Apparently Drowned." He stated that these instructions had already been issued, in placard form, to all the police stations in that colony, and he was happy to state that the constables, acting upon the instructions, had resuscitated many persons who would otherwise have perished. We would suggest that a copy of these instructions might be advantageously placed in the hands of every policeman in the United Kingdom. Reports were read from the inspector and the assistant inspector of life-boats to the society on their recent visits to the coast. The proceedings then terminated. We would here make a suggestion that a collection might be made next Sunday in all our churches and chapels in aid of the funds of the National Life-boat Institution. We feel assured that many, both rich and poor, would be glad to have an opportunity thus to testify their appreciation of the noble work of the life-boat society.

VESUVIUS.—The eruption of Vesuvius continues and increases, so as to awaken considerable apprehension in the villages which surround it. On the 25th ult. the shocks at Torre del Greco were so violent that the population were in trembling expectation of a renewal of the disasters of 1861. In Resina, on the night following, the staircase of a house was thrown down, and another house opened in the middle, so that the inhabitants of that street fled. The spectacle as it is witnessed from Naples has now become magnificent, as a vast stream of lava is flowing down. Strangers are coming in daily to see this rare and grand demonstration of Vesuvius.

GOVERNMENT OF THE METROPOLIS.—On Monday night an adjourned conference, composed principally of vestrymen, and convened for the purpose of discussing the various schemes for the improvement of the local government of the metropolis, was held at St. James's Hall. A very warm discussion took place with reference to Mr. Mill's Metropolitan Government Bill, the great majority of those present condemning the measure strongly and deprecating any change so sweeping as that proposed by the hon. member for Westminster. The supporters of the hon. gentleman's scheme could scarcely obtain a hearing, and a resolution condemnatory of the measure was adopted.

